Comelec to investigate Erap for gun in car

STORY ON PAGE A2

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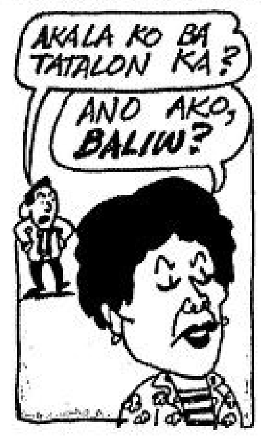
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2001 ★ 40 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 137 ₱15


AKALA KO BA TATALON KA?
ANO AKO, BALIW?

Miriam refuses to jump

BY D. PAZZIBUGAN

DAVAO CITY—There was no sign of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago hurtling to earth from a plane

MIRIAM/ A4

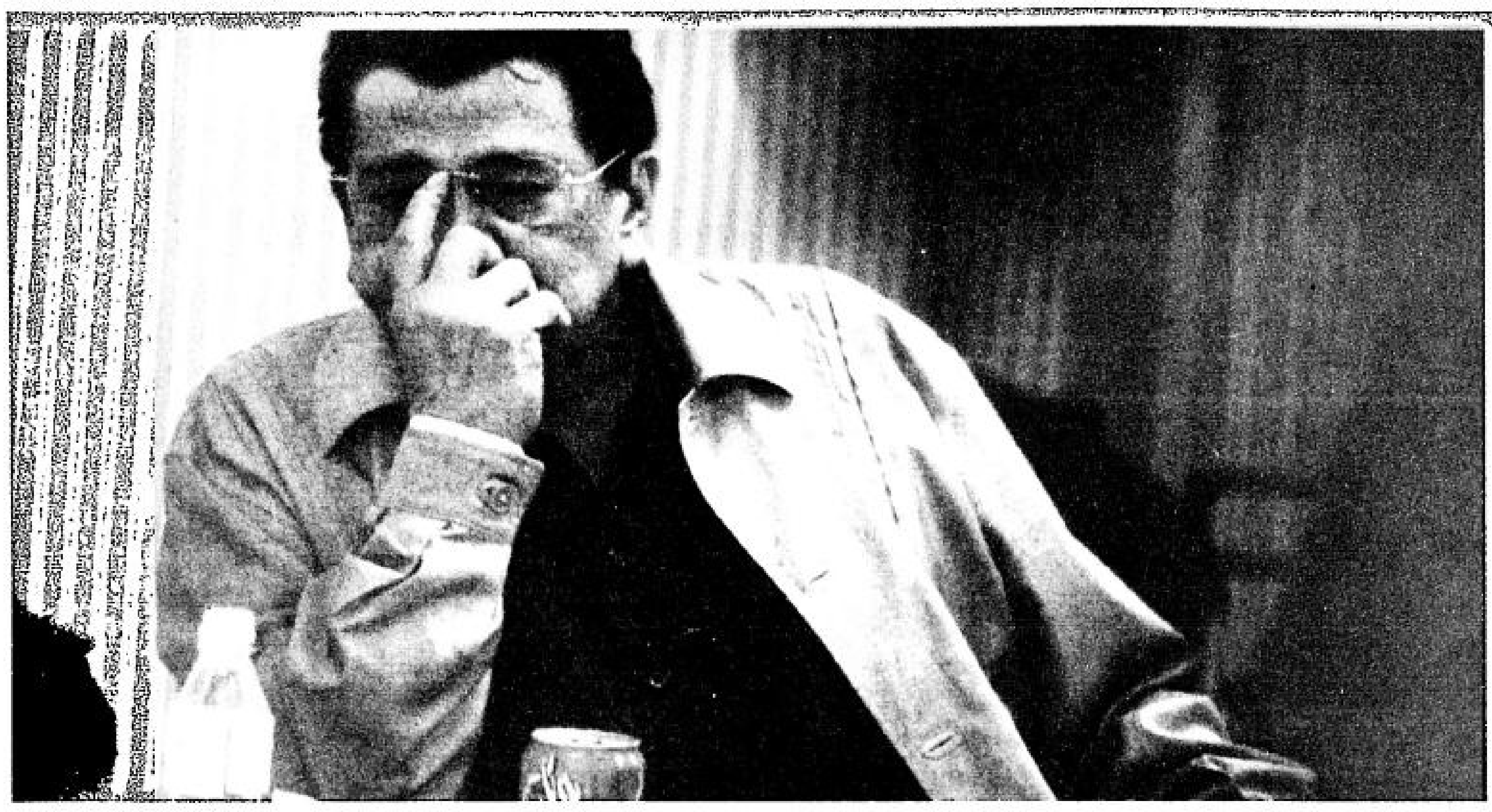
Market perks up by 1.3 percent

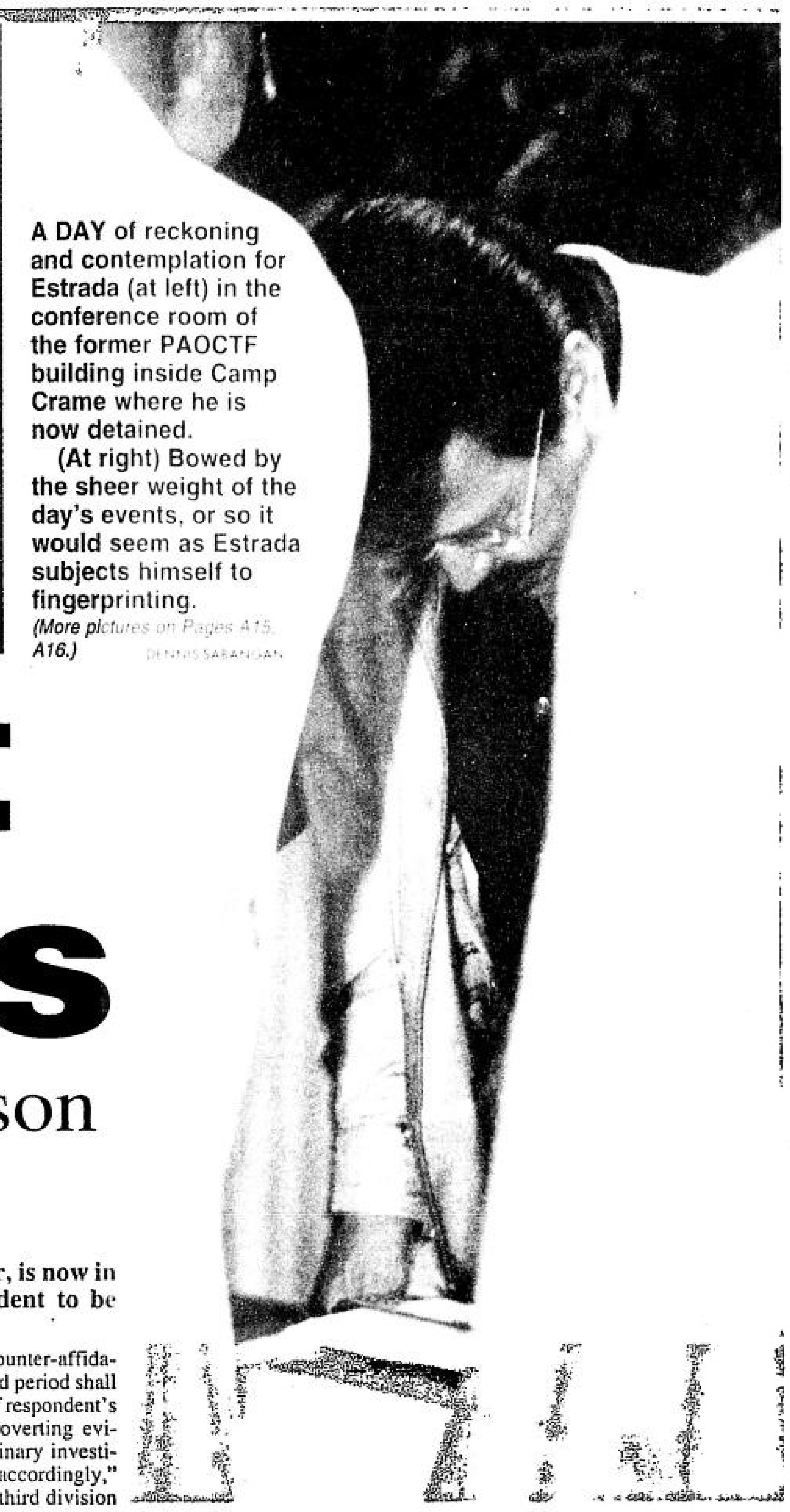
BY CLARISSA BATINO AND DORIS DUMLAO

A LAST-MINUTE buying binge perked up the lethargic market by 1.3 percent and Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo sounded an upbeat note with Joseph Estrada's arrest yesterday on a charge of plunder.

Romulo said the arrest of the disgraced leader should boost the economy and help restore the

MARKET/ A9





A DAY of reckoning and contemplation for Estrada (at left) in the conference room of the former PAOCTF building inside Camp Crame where he is now detained.

(At right) Bowed by the sheer weight of the day's events, or so it would seem as Estrada subjects himself to fingerprinting.

(More pictures on Pages A15, A16.) DENNIS SABANGAN

This is not the movies

Joseph Estrada: From Palace to prison

IN GOOD times and bad, his children Jude, Jackie and husband Beaver Lopez, and JV Ejercito are there for the ex-president. DENNIS SABANGAN

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL, DONNA S. CUETO AND CHRISTINE HERRERA

THIS is not the movies.

Joseph Ejercito Estrada, a former action star, is now in detention, becoming the country's first president to be arrested for economic plunder.

The warrant of arrest served by a Sandiganbayan sheriff yesterday on Estrada at his home on Polk Street at the North Greenhills Subdivision in San Juan also identified him as "Asiong Salonga" and "Jose Velarde."

Asiong Salonga was a Tondo toughie he played in a blockbuster movie in the '60s and Jose Velarde was an alias that he allegedly used in a secret P3.2-billion bank account at Equitable PCI Bank while he was President.

The Sandiganbayan directed Estrada to submit his counter-affidavit together with the affidavits of his witnesses and other supporting documents within 10 days.

"Failure to file a counter-affidavit within the aforesaid period shall be deemed a waiver of respondent's right to submit controverting evidence and the preliminary investigation shall proceed accordingly," the Sandiganbayan's third division said in a resolution.

"Thereafter, this case shall be deemed submitted for resolution on the basis of the evidence presented by the parties whose presence may be dispensed with, unless otherwise required for clarificatory questioning," the resolution said.

Three justices—chair Anacleto Badoy Jr., Teresita Leonardo-de Castro and Ricardo Ilarde—signed

THIS/ A4

4-HOUR DRAMA

Erap's biggest box-office hit

BY VOLT CONTRERAS, BLANCHE S. RIVERA AND AGNES E. DONATO

WOMEN wailed, men screamed curses, choppers thundered overhead, and battle-ready police formed a wall of flesh outside the high brown gate of No. 1 Polk Street in North Greenhills, San Juan.

Sandiganbayan Court Sheriff Ed Urieta entered the mansion behind the gate to serve the first arrest warrant issued against a former Philippine president, and found members of the family of Joseph Estrada weeping, a witness said.

Urieta saluted the defendant.

"We're just doing our job," he reportedly said.

The 64-year-old former president glumly answered "OK" as his son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, who was also being arrested, and other members of his family, wept, the witness said.

Former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito retained her composure and told her children: "Don't cry."

It was the climax of a day-long drama that probably broke all the

ERAP'S/ A9

Macapagal: A historic moment

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

APART from issuing a prepared statement, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday pointedly avoided commenting on the arrest of her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, but it seemed that almost everyone else in Philippine politics had something to say about the event.

Two other political figures were also conspicuously quiet for a change—former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, both outspoken critics of Estrada.

"A historic moment" was the phrase Ms Macapagal finally used in her official statement hailing the arrest, but she left the job of addressing the public to her new presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao after Estrada was safely in Camp Crame.

"We have shown that justice is working in the Philippines," Tiglao told reporters.

"We consider this a historic moment. We showed that even the former highest official of the land could be held answerable for his actions," he said.

In a phone interview from Vigan, "Juetengate" whistleblower Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson said "what happened was right."

"Estrada should realize that this is real life, that what is happening is not the movies," he said of the former actor.

MACAPAGAL/ A4

Estrada supporters vow Edsa III

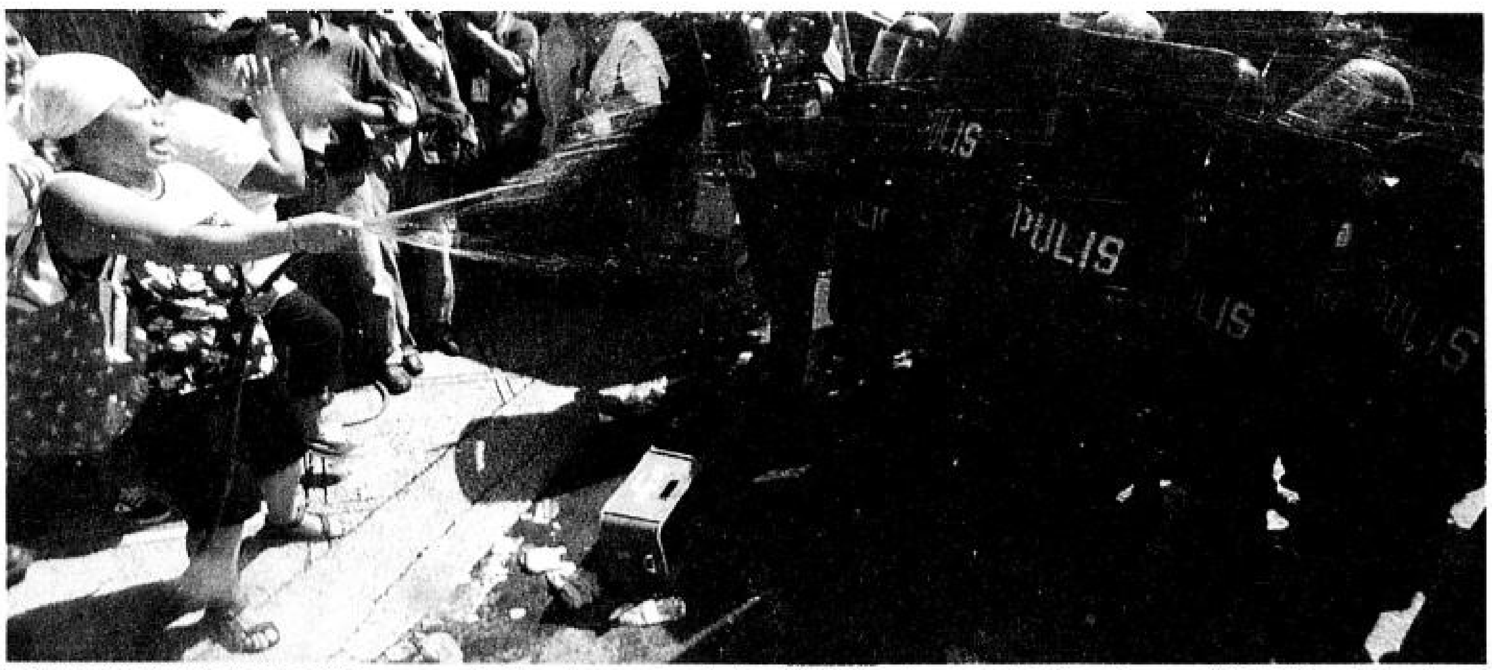
BY DAVE VERIDIANO, AGNES DONATO AND PHILIP TUBEZA

DIE-HARD supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada stormed the gates of Camp Crame in Quezon City to protest their hero's arrest.

Minutes after Estrada arrived at the compound of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), about 3,000 of his supporters massed up in front of Camp Crame, stopping traffic on the main highway of Edsa.

The protesters, shouting "Edsa

ESTRADA/ A15



WILD and wet: Not exactly a water cannon, but nice try, anyway, for the lady with a hose outside the main gate of North Greenhills, who is desperately trying to prevent the police from arresting her idol, Joseph Estrada. ERIK ARAZAS

Estrada arrest a turning point in RP politics

BY AMANDO DORONILA

ANALYSIS

HISTORY unfolded before the eyes of the Filipino people when a phalanx of police escorted former President Estrada and his son, Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, from their home on Polk Street.

The government has taken a pivotal step toward empowering the Philippine state whose institutions had been damaged by a president who had ruled the country like a personal fiefdom, undermining its state institutions.

The arrest is an event with a cathartic impact on a nation that has to prove that its judicial system can work equally for both the powerful

ESTRADA ARREST/ A16

Second FRONT PAGE

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APR 28-30 28-29 30	 9-5:30 9-12:00	OPERATING A LAUNDRY SHOP BUSINESS (SMALL-SCALE) (with field trip)	2,475.00	
APR 28-MAY 1	9-4:00	OPERATING A RETAIL STORE BUSINESS (with field trip)	3,300.00	
APR 30-MAY 1	9-5:30	SETTING UP A HARDWARE AND CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY STORE	1,650.00	
APR 30-MAY 1	9-5:30	HAIR TRIMMING, PERMING, DYEING AND MAKE-UP TECHNIQUES	2,200.00	
APR 30-MAY 1	9-5:30	RESIN BONDED ARTWARES	3,300.00	
MAY 2-3	9-5:30	PAPER RECYCLING (with Novelty Paper Products)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 2-3	9-5:30	MEAT SHOP MANAGEMENT AND MEAT CUTTING (with field trip)	1,960.00	1,386.00
MAY 2-4	9-5:30	CURTAINS AND CUSHIONS (on site)	2,420.00	1,694.00
MAY 2-4 2-3 4	9-5:30 1-5:30 9-4:00	COCONUT MINI-OIL MILLING AND REFINING (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST) (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 3	9-5:30	SETTING UP A TRAVEL AGENCY	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 4	9-5:30	FRANCHISING A BUSINESS	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 3-4	9-5:30	FASTFOOD BUSINESS OPERATION (with field trip)	1,960.00	1,386.00
MAY 5-6	9-5:30	HERBAL BATH SOAP (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 5-6	9-5:30	DECORATIVE CANDLE MAKING (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 5-6	9-5:30	AROMATHERAPY	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 5-6	9-5:30	JEWELRY APPRAISAL AND PAWNSHOP OPERATION	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 7	9-5:30	PERFUMES AND COLOGNES	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 7-8	9-5:30	WOOD FRAMING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 7-8	9-5:30	ORGANIZING PARTY FUNFARE AS A BUSINESS	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 7-8	9-5:30	PRACTICAL MARKETING FOR ENTREPRENEURS	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 9-10	9-5:30	BASIC COURSE ON WAITERING AND BARTENDING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 9-10	9-5:30	BASIC RESERVATION & TICKETING FOR TRAVEL AGENCIES (with field trip)	1,960.00	1,386.00
MAY 9-11	9-5:30	FRESH FLOWER ARRANGEMENT AND FLOWER SHOP OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT (with field trip)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 10-11	9-5:30	REFLEXOLOGY	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 10-11	9-5:30	ESTABLISHING AN EXPORT BUSINESS	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 12-13	9-5:30	CATERING BUSINESS OPERATION	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 12-13	9-5:30	ACCOUNTING AND RECORD-KEEPING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 12-13	9-5:30	AROMA CANDLE MAKING (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 12-13 & 15	9-5:30 9-12:00	OPERATING A LAUNDRY SHOP BUSINESS (SMALL SCALE) (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 15-16	9-5:30	DESIGN AND OPERATION OF A WATER REFILLING STATION BUSINESS (with field trip)	1,960.00	1,386.00
MAY 15-16	9-5:30	SETTING UP A HARDWARE AND CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY STORE	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 15-17	9-4:00	HOW TO START AND MANAGE A PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTER (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 15-18	9-5:30	FIBERGLASS PRODUCTS MANUFACTURING	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 15-18	9-5:30	STARTING A RESTAURANT BUSINESS (with field trip)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 17-18	9-5:30	ACUPRESSURE THERAPY (Scientific Body Massage)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 19-20	9-5:30	LAUNDRY SOAP AND DETERGENTS (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 19-20	9-5:30	CORSAGE AND BOUQUET MAKING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 19-20	9-5:30	DECORATIVE CANDLE MAKING (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 19-20	9-5:30	DOLLAR TRADING /FOREIGN CURRENCY EXCHANGE	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 19-21	9-5:30	PROFESSIONAL HOUSEKEEPING (Home, Hotel & Shipping Vessel)(with field trip)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 21-22 (NEW)	9-5:30	OPERATING A TRANSPORT (Cooperative) BUSINESS	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 21-22	9-5:30	JEWELRY APPRAISAL AND PAWNSHOP OPERATION	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 21-24	9-5:30	SILKSCREEN PRINGTING	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 22-23	9-5:30	DRIED FLORAL ARRANGEMENT	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 23	9-5:30	SETTING UP A TRAVEL AGENCY	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 24-25	9-5:30	CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY (BASIC)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 24-25	9-5:30	PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 26-27	9-5:30	JAPANESE SHIATSU THERAPY	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 26-27	9-5:30	AROMA CANDLE MAKING (in cooperation with ITDI/DOST)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 26-28 26-27 28	 9-5:30 9-12:00	OPERATING A LAUNDRY SHOP BUSINESS (SMALL SCALE) (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 26-28	9-5:30	FRESH FLOWER ARRANGEMENT AND FLOWER SHOP OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT (with field trip)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 28	9-5:30	FRANCHISING A BUSINESS	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 28-29	9-5:30	BASIC IMPORT PROCEDURES	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 28-29	9-5:30	SKIN CARE PRODUCTS	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 29-JUN 1	9-5:30	ELECTROPLATING	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 29-JUN 1	9-4:00	OPERATING A RETAIL STORE BUSINESS (with field trip)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 30-31	9-5:30	CATERING BUSINESS OPERATION	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 31-JUN 1	9-5:30	SETTING UP A HARDWARE AND CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY STORE	1,650.00	1,155.00
MAY 31-JUN 1	9-5:30	ADVANCED AND LATEST TRENDS IN FLORAL DESIGN (FLOWER ARRANGEMENT) (Pre-requisite: basic knowledge of flower arrangement)	2,200.00	1,540.00

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DATE	TIME	COURSE	REGULAR FEE	LESS 30%
APR 27-28	9-5:30	INTENSIVE CULTURE OF TILAPIA IN TANKS (with field trip)	P 1,980.00	P
APR 27-28	9-5:30	DOG BREEDING WITH BUY-BACK SCHEME (with field trip)	1,980.00	
MAY 2-4	9-4:00	MANGO PRODUCTION (with Improved Flower Induction) AND POST-HARVEST HANDLING AND STORAGE TECHNOLOGY (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 3-5	9-4:00	DUCK RAISING (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 5-7	9-4:00	ORCHID GROWING AND NURSERY MANAGEMENT (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 7-11	9-4:00	SWINE PRODUCTION (with field trip)	2,970.00	2,079.00
MAY 9-10	9-5:30	BREEDING AND CULTURE OF FRESHWATER AQUARIUM FISHES (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 10-11	9-5:30	LAPU-LAPU CULTURE (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 11-12	9-5:30	HONEYBEE CULTURE (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 12-13 & 15 12 13 15	 9-5:30 1-5:30 9-2:00	TILAPIA CULTURE (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 16-17	9-5:30	SEMI-INTENSIVE CULTURE OF MILKFISH (*BANGUS*) IN MARINE, BRACKISH AND FRESH WATER (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 17-19	9-4:00	LAYER PRODUCTION (TABLE EGG) (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 21-23	9-4:00	ANIMAL FEED FORMULATION AND PRODUCTION (with field trip)	2,475.00	1,732.50
MAY 22-25 22-24 25	 9-6:00 9-2:00	COMPREHENSIVE MUSHROOM GROWING (Tropical, Semi-temperate and Temperate) (with field trip)	2,640.00	1,848.00
MAY 23-24	9-5:30	MUD CRAB (*ALIMANGO*) JUVENILE REARING, FATTENING AND GROW-OUT CULTURE (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 25-26	9-5:30	MANAGING, CARING FOR, AND BREEDING PARAKEETS AND LOVE BIRDS (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 25-26	9-5:30	INTENSIVE CULTURE OF TILAPIA IN TANKS (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00
MAY 30-31	9-5:30	GOAT AND SHEEP RAISING (with field trip)	1,980.00	1,386.00

FOOD COURSES

DATE	TIME	COURSE	REGULAR FEE	LESS 30%
APR 28-30 28-29 30	 9-5:30 9-12:00	HOW TO BE A CANTEEN CONCESSIONAIRE (with field trip)	P 2,530.00	
APR 28-MAY 1	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,970.00	
APR 30-MAY 1	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	2,200.00	
MAY 2-3	9-5:30	ASSORTED BROWNIES, COOKIES AND BARS	2,200.00	P 1,540.00
MAY 4	9-5:30	FLAVORED AND FORTIFIED JUICE	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 4	9-5:30	KAMIAS PROCESSING	1,540.00	1,078.00
MAY 5-6	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,970.00	2,079.00
MAY 8-9	9-5:30	MANGO PROCESSING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 10-11	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 12-13	9-5:30	SPECIALTY CAKES AND PASTRIES	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 15-18	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,970.00	2,079.00
MAY 17-18	9-5:30	PROCESSING OF CHICHARON AND OTHER PORK BY-PRODUCTS	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 19-20	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 21-22	9-5:30	PASTILLAS MAKING	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 23	9-5:30	FLAVORED AND FORTIFIED JUICE	1,100.00	770.00
MAY 24-25	9-5:30	PROFESSIONAL PASTRIES AND DESSERTS	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 24-25	9-5:30	INTERNATIONAL CUISINE (ASIAN AND EUROPEAN)	3,300.00	2,310.00
MAY 26-28 26-27 28	 9-5:30 9-12:00	HOW TO BE A CANTEEN CONCESSIONAIRE (with field trip)	2,530.00	1771.00
MAY 26-29	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,970.00	2,079.00
MAY 28-29	9-5:30	DRIED AND DEHYDRATED FRUITS	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 30-31	9-5:30	COCONUT WATER PROCESSING (with field trip)	2,200.00	1,540.00
MAY 30-31	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	2,200.00	1,540.00

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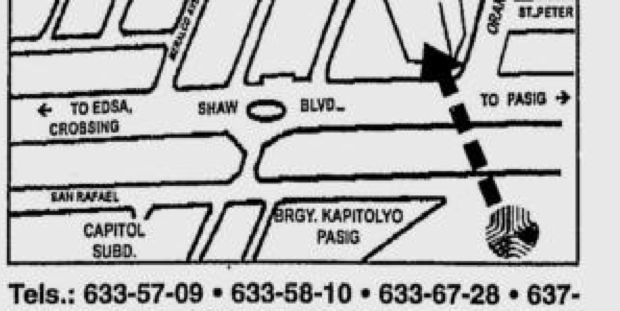

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Erap faces probe for gun in car

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada could get another jail term, albeit decidedly shorter than the one he is now facing for economic plunder.

The chair of the Commission on Elections, Alfredo Benipayo, yesterday said he would order an investigation into reports that Estrada may have been carrying a gun when he went on a birthday tour of urban poor settlements in Taguig.

But Benipayo said he would have to look at the report of the Comelec committee on firearms and security personnel on the 18,679 individuals who were given certificates of exemption from the election gun ban.

"I don't have that information now (if Estrada has a gun ban exemption)," Benipayo said in an ambush interview at the Club Filipino.

Estrada has admitted to being the owner of the gun, but questioned what he called the "media hype" over the issue.

A front-page photo in the Manila Standard newspaper last week showed a holstered gun lying next to Estrada's left foot as he was about to alight from a van during his Taguig birthday tour.

"We will look into that matter," said Benipayo, adding that the Comelec could not just order a probe on the basis of a newspaper photo alone.

"No evidence has been submitted yet," Benipayo said.

Ralph Lantion, the commissioner in charge of the committee on firearms and security personnel, could not recall if he had signed a certificate of exemption for Estrada or if the ousted president had applied for such an exemption.

The INQUIRER again tried to verify if Estrada was among 18,679 persons granted exemptions, but Lantion was in Isabela yesterday. His office staff said they were not authorized to divulge information from "confidential files."

The INQUIRER also earlier learned that Comelec has yet to computerize those records.

Lantion's staff said the records were still being encoded in their computers, and that this operation was being delayed by other preparatory activities for the May 14 elections.

Available records showed that of the 37,037 applicants for gun ban exemptions, only 18,679 were approved as of April 20. Among those exempted were 5,943 government employees and officials and 152 private individuals.

Without an exemption certificate, private individuals and law enforcement officers not on official duty may not carry firearms outside of their places of residence or business during the election period, which started on Jan. 2 and ends on June 13.

Violators face imprisonment of one to six years under the Omnibus Election Code.

Businessmen vote 13-0 in mock polls

By Gil Cabacungan

IF the May 14 polls were to be decided today by country's business captains, the administration-backed People Power Coalition would sweep the senatorial race.

The Makati Business Club, in mock elections held between April 16 and 24, reported that nearly 40 percent of its members who cast ballots voted straight PPC.

A total of 105, or 15 percent, of the MBC's roster of 700 members cast mock votes. MBC members represent the country's top 400 corporations.

Reelectionists Franklin Drilon (99 percent share of the votes) and Ramon Magsaysay (98 percent) topped the election with former socio-economic planning secretary Winnie Monsod coming in third (96 percent).

The rest of the PPC slate and their share of the votes were Sergio Osmeña III (96 percent), Juan Flavier (92 percent), Wigberto Tañada (92 percent), Manuel Villar (90 percent), Joker Arroyo (90 percent), Roberto Pagdanganan (78 percent), Liwayway Vinzons-Chato (78 percent), Ernesto Herrera (74 percent), Francis Pangilinan (70 percent) and Ralph Recto (63 percent).

The best the opposition Puwersa ng Masa coalition could do was 14th which went to Edgardo Angara with 23 percent.

In Isabela, the ruling clan once closely allied with deposed President Joseph Estrada promised to work for a 13-0 PPC sweep in the province.

The Dy family—led by Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy, Rep. Faustino Dy Jr. and Cauayan Mayor Faustino Dy III—declared their "all-out support" for the administration candidates to President Macapagal-Arroyo during her campaign swing through the province.

"Let us make a loan to President Macapagal that we could collect on later—vote 13-0," Rep. Faustino Dy Jr. told about 5,000 Isabelinos who attended the PPC rally. *With Christine Avendaño and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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'Magic' is key to 13-0 –Enrile

DAVAO CITY—Opposition candidate Juan Ponce Enrile said here the only way the administration People Power Coalition could sweep the senatorial race was by replicating the "Cory magic" of the 1987 Congressional elections.

But even as he addressed the audience at the Rizal Park here, the crowd turned unruly after the organizers lost control over their supporters.

Even Enrile and Sen. Vicente Sotto III were shoved as the crowd rushed the stage and destroyed the iron railings and plants around it.

Enrile said "Cory magic" involved computer manipulation by the Aquino administration of the election results in 1987, thereby winning for the Laban Party 22 of the 24 contested Senate seats.

Enrile said "Cory magic" will be reincarnated as "Gloria magic" to ensure the victory of the 13 People Power Coalition's senatorial candidates.

He said the opposition Puwersa ng Masa was certain of victory in Mindanao judging by the turnout at the Tuesday night rally.

Aside from Enrile, Puwersa bets present were Miriam Santiago, Dr. Luisa "Loi" Estrada, Orlando Mercado, Ombra Tamano, Jamby Madrigal and Santanina Rasul.

"We could no longer control the crowd. This was their way of showing sympathy for the Puwersa candidates in view of Estrada's impending arrest," said Richard Burgos, convenor of the Pro-Erap Movement Mindanao, on the eve of deposed President Joseph Estrada's arrest for plunder yesterday.

Burgos estimated the crowd here at 40,000 but police said it did not reach 10,000.

Former first lady Dr. Loi Estrada drew the loudest cheers from the audience which chanted "Erap *pa rin*" as she climbed up the stage. *Jowel F. Canuday and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

BASILAN AMBUSH

Abu bandits kill 14 militiamen

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Fourteen militiamen were killed in an encounter with some 60 Abu Sayyaf bandits in an island off the town of Sumisip, Basilan, on Tuesday morning.

Col. Jovenal Narcise, an Army spokesman, said members of the Civilian Volunteers Organization (CVO) were patrolling the Tapiantana Island when they were ambushed by the bandits, allegedly led by the group's leaders, Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Ahmad Salayuddin alias Abu Sabaya.

Sabaya, in a telephone interview with dxLL Radyo Ukay, claimed that aside from killing 14 CVO members, his group also seized 15 high-powered firearms as well as three motorized pumpboats used by the victims.

The incident confirmed reports that Janjalani's group was able to slip out of Sulu to flee from the military's all-out offensive in that province.

But Narcise could not say if hostage Filipino Roland Ullah was with Janjalani's group.

Ullah, a diving instructor, is the remaining captive of the 21 mostly foreign tourists taken by the Abu Sayyaf from a resort in Sipadan, Malaysia, last year.

"As far as the military is concerned, we still have not received any confirmatory reports about the presence of Roland Ullah in Basilan," Narcise said. *Jonathan F. Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Obet, Edcel drop '98 protests

By G. Lacuarta

SENATORIAL candidate Roberto Pagdanganan and former Rep. Edcel Lagman have agreed to withdraw their election protests against Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta to allow the Commission on Elections to use 174,000 ballot boxes where disputed ballots are contained.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo said Pagdanganan and Lagman, who filed their protest after the 1998 national elections have agreed to drop their complaints pending with the Senate Electoral Tribunal for three years now after he informed them that the election body needed the ballot boxes for the May 14 elections.

Benipayo said the 174,000 ballot boxes which were tied up as evidence in the electoral protest filed, represent close to 60 percent of the total number of ballot boxes needed for the 234,000 precincts nationwide.

"We'll be needing some of them in Metro Manila but majority of them are in the provinces where they were used," Benipayo said.

The Supreme Court recently issued a resolution that the Comelec could not touch any of the 174,000 ballot boxes because of the pending protest at the SET.

"I got in touch with Pagdanganan the other night and I explained to him that we cannot have an election if there are no ballot boxes. So I appealed to his sense of patriotism and cooperation," Benipayo said.

Benipayo said Pagdanganan agreed to withdraw the protest so he talked next to Lagman, who also offered to drop the complaint.

"So that's a very happy solution to what I thought was a critical situation," he said.

Lagman in July 1998 filed before the SET an electoral protest against Guingona and Oreta, 11th and 12th placers, respectively, in the elections that year. He accused them of benefiting from "fraudulent schemes to thwart the electorate's will."

Pagdanganan and former executive secretary Ruben Torres were named as "necessary protestees," having placed 13th and 14th in the official Commission on Elections tally used in the proclamation of 12 winning senatorial candidates.

Lagman, who placed 15th in the senatorial race, said "massive cheating" was done by "special operators" in six cities and municipalities in the National Capital Region. He said cheating also took place in Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, covering a total of 38 provinces.

Lagman said cheating was done through "Operation Dagdag-Bawas" (vote-padding and -shaving) and "Operation Palit Forma," purportedly the substitution of election forms as election returns and certificates of canvass.

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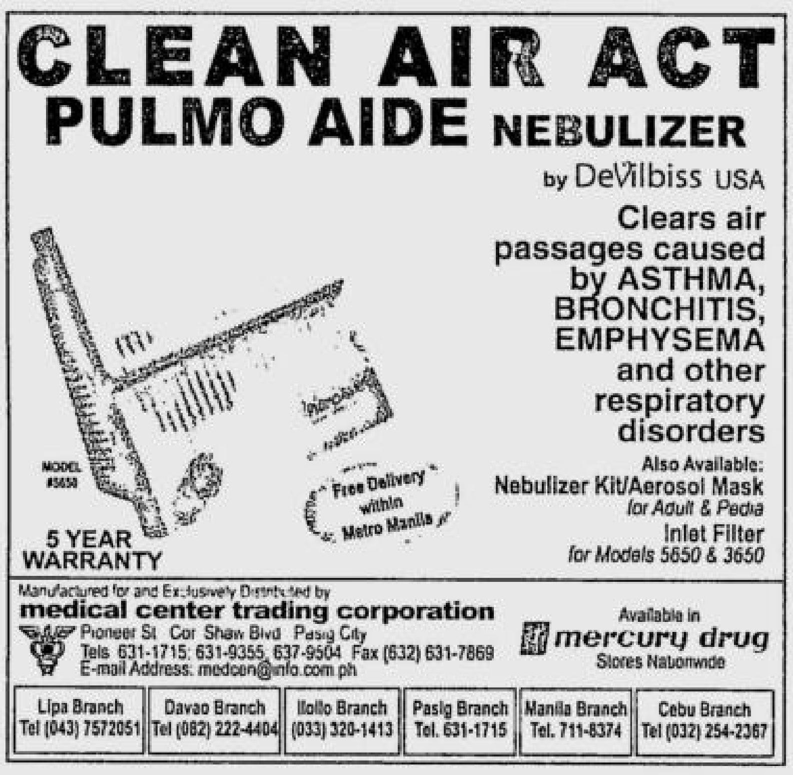
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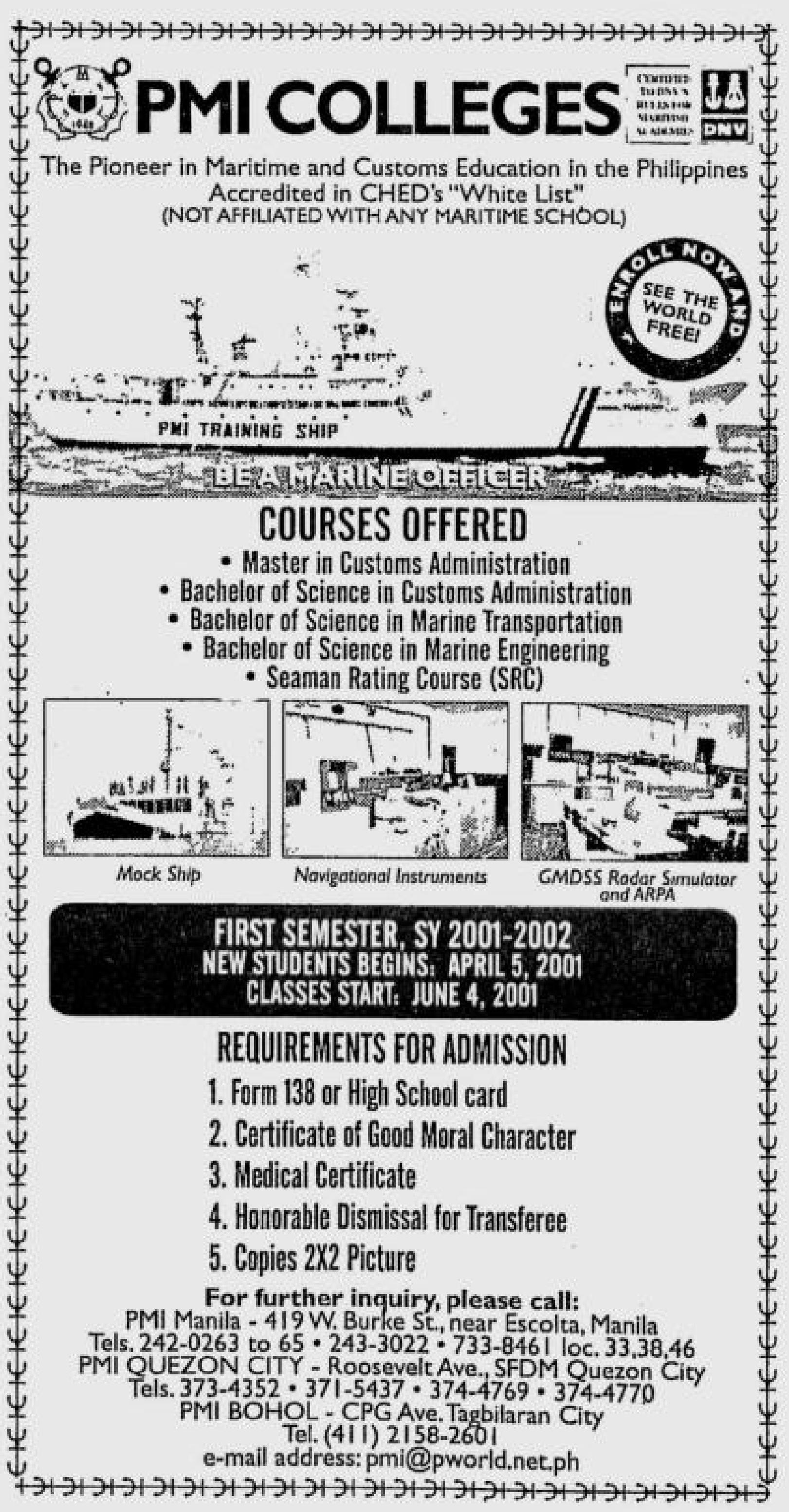
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(From page A1)

the resolution.

Chief presidential counsel Avelino Cruz Jr. said lawyers for Estrada had only two options left: they could either go to trial immediately or file a motion with the Sandiganbayan to seek bail in the supposedly non-bailable offense of economic plunder.

Either way, the process will take some time, according to Cruz. In the meantime, Estrada remains in jail.

"Whether you go to trial or go to a motion to admit to bail, the prosecution will present all or substantially all of its evidence. The former President will also present his evidence," Cruz said.

"It will take a little while to present the evidence because, I understand, there are 15 witnesses for the prosecution, and there are voluminous evidence to be presented," he said.

Cruz said that even in a non-bailable offense like plunder an accused could be granted bail only if he could show that the evidence against him was not strong.

"But the evidence we have here is very strong. The evidence is more than sufficient for a conviction," he said.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena said the anti-graft court's third division issued the arrest warrants for Estrada and seven others because it found "probable cause" for the plunder case.

Appeal for bail

At a morning briefing where he announced the issuance of the arrest warrants, Garchitorena said lawyers for Estrada could still ask the anti-graft court for bail. After the request for bail, an arraignment will be set and trial will proceed.

But Garchitorena said bail could not be posted on the same day of the arrest because there would still be an arraignment and, if appropriate, a pre-trial.

Asked if Estrada would stay in detention for the entire duration of the trial, the presiding justice said he would stay in jail for the duration of the hearings on bail "until the third division shall have determined that there is less than strong evidence."

"If there is less than strong evidence, then he is entitled to bail," Garchitorena said.

Estrada's lawyers appealed for bail before the third division, which has set a hearing for one of the motions to suspend the process.

But the justices of the third division told them that the court had yet to acquire custody over Estrada and therefore, he had no right to request bail.

The justices added that the motion for bail would be given due course once the accused was in their custody.

Ombudsman against bail

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto disclosed that the prosecution panel was already prepared to present evidence to quash any move to allow Estrada to post bail.

"In all probability, the court will require us to present evidence since we are anticipating a motion for bail from the defense panel. The court will then ask us to present evidence to show a strong evidence of guilt," he said.

Desierto said the prosecution panel would present documentary and testimonial evidence. "To start with, we will present 10 witnesses," he said.

Appeal for house arrest

Invoking "compassionate justice and equity," Raymond Fortun, one of Estrada's lawyers, also asked the third division to place Estrada and his son Mayor Jose "Jinggoy" Estrada, one of the accused, under "house arrest."

Also ordered arrested yesterday were lawyer Edward Serapio; Yolanda Ricaforte; businessman Charlie "Atong" Ang; Alma Alfaro; a John Doe identified as Eleuterio Tan or Eleuterio Ramos Tan or Mr. Uy; and a Jane Doe identified as Delia Rajas.

At 8:45 last night, Serapio, a personal lawyer of Estrada and corporate secretary of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation, surrendered to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group headed by Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto.

But police said Ricaforte (Estrada's personal auditor), Ang and Eleuterio Ramos Tan had already left the country to escape prosecution.

In a five-page ex-parte motion, Fortun said, among other things, that there was nothing in the Constitution that prohibits an accused from being detained in a place other than a city or municipal jail.

Fortun said placing the Estradas under house arrest would ensure their security because the former President had "many enemies."

But Malacañang ruled out a house arrest, saying this was "technically, not an option."

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the former President was "still in good health" and there was no reason for the Sandiganbayan to grant the petition of Estrada's lawyer to have him placed under house arrest.

"Actually it's given only in extreme cases (when) a person's health (is at stake)," he said.

Rule of law

Tiglao said that the arrest of Estrada meant the return of the rule of law in the Philippines.

He said that with the arrest of Estrada, Filipinos had shown to the world that "we have a rule of law finally."

"This means that we can enforce our laws," he said.

Interior Secretary Joey Lina also said that the arrests showed that no one was above the law.

"Let this be a warning to all plunderers and would-be plunderers," he said at a separate news conference.

Downfall

Estrada's downfall began when accusations of corruption led to a six-week Senate impeachment starting on Dec. 7.

The trial was aborted on Jan. 16 when senators voted against opening a sealed envelope that prosecutors alleged would tie Estrada to a multimillion-dollar bank account.

The vote sparked mass protests demanding that Estrada resign, and he left the Palace through the back door on Jan. 20. The Supreme Court ruled that he was effectively resigned.

On April 4, he was indicted for allegedly pocketing P4 billion in kickbacks and payoffs during 31 months in office. His indictment came after the Supreme Court unanimously rejected his appeals of a ruling that stripped away his presidential immunity.

Last week, Estrada posted bail after the court issued an arrest warrant on charges of perjury and graft.

Besides plunder, Estrada was also charged with three other counts of violating the anti-graft law, illegal use of an alias and violation of the law on ethical standards.

Desierto asked the court last week to let him withdraw the graft charges and the violation of ethical standards so prosecutors could focus on the plunder case.

Estrada and his son are now being held in "temporary detention" at the office of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

The father and son were provided separate cells.

They will stay at the PAOCTF detention cell overnight or until after the PNP gets approval from the Sandiganbayan to transfer them to the PNP-Special Action Forces Training and Seminar Center at Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Voluntary surrender

Sandiganbayan Sheriff Edgardo Urieta and the PNP chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, said the Estradas were not arrested as they "voluntarily surrendered."

"Estrada was actually waiting for us. He was sad. He did not say anything but 'let's go,'" Mendoza said. The former President was clad in a white jacket with blue undershirt and light denim pants.

Mendoza said Estrada's lawyers had told him that the former President had wanted to surrender.

But the surrender hit a snag after a thousand Estrada supporters blocked the way in front of Estrada's residence.

Estrada and his son were brought to the conference room of the former PAOCTF building, where they were fingerprinted and their mug shots, taken.

They were also made to undergo a medical checkup.

Estrada was accompanied by his wife Loi, his children Joel Osorio, JV, Jude and Jackie and her husband Beaver Lopez as well as lawyers Rene Saguisag, Jose Flaminiano, former Supreme Court Chief Justice Andres Narvasa and Puwersa ng Masa campaign manager Ronaldo Puno.

Actor Phillip Salvador, Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III and Ramon Fernandez also arrived at Camp Crame to give moral support to the ousted President and their friend Jinggoy.

At a news conference, Mendoza said the PNP would petition today the Sandiganbayan to request the transfer of Estrada and Jinggoy to the PNP-SAF detention cell in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Urieta agreed that the father and son needed to be transferred to Sta. Rosa for security reasons.

Mendoza said the safety of Estrada was the primary consideration for a transfer.

"They may be safe in Camp Crame but I don't feel they are secured here. They would be lumped here with kidnappers, car thieves, drug suspects and Moro rebels like (a brother of the late Abu Sayyaf chief) Janjalani who are currently detained here," Mendoza said.

Lina said there was no guarantee that one of the inmates would make an attempt on the life of the former President *"para sumikat"* (to become famous).

In deciding to detain the father and son at the PNP-SAF, Mendoza said, it would be easier for the police to guard both of them in one place than to detain them in separate prison cells.

Last night, reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago visited the deposed President in Camp Crame. She said Estrada should not have been arrested because he was merely a President on leave. ***With a report from Michael Lim Ubac***

Macapagal: A historic moment

(From page A1)

Militant groups in particular were jubilant over the long awaited arrest of the man whom they helped remove from office almost three months ago.

Bayan Muna, Bayan, KMU and other affiliated groups such as Anakbayan, Gabriela, Kadamay, Migrante and the League of Filipino Students held a "victory party" at the Welcome Rotunda in Quezon City late in the afternoon.

But Manang Placilda Quemado, 52, a vendor in Digos City, perhaps summed up the feelings of hordes of pro-Estrada supporters throughout the country when she told a reporter: "The bad thing about being poor is we cannot even afford to go to Manila to show our support for President Estrada."

Ms Macapagal went to great lengths to evade questions about the arrest during a brief phone interview with CNN's "BizAsia."

The President insisted that CNN refer to her press statement. "My spokesman has already read my statement and I wish to say nothing further than that," she said in a reply to one such question. Pressed to repeat the statement, she said she would "rather not be quoted verbally, I would rather not be quoted live on my statement."

Asked whether she was going to support the death penalty in relation to Estrada's plunder case, she said, "I've already told you I'm not to speak about that personally."

Tiglao said the morning-long tension surrounding Estrada's arrest had neither affected the President nor disrupted her schedule.

"She was busy the entire morning in Isabela, visiting some projects. When she arrived around 12 o'clock, she went straight to a civil society meeting of peasants. She was very busy," he said.

'As it should be'

"This is as it should be. Justice is the key issue here," the President said in the statement read by Tiglao in a press briefing called minutes after Estrada's arrest.

"We appeal to the former president to submit himself willingly to show that he is a dignified person," Tiglao said.

In the statement, apart from issuing a prepared statement, the President also tried to assure Estrada's restive supporters that he "will have his day in court."

"The Sandiganbayan has spoken. And the message is clear," she said, noting that Estrada was arrested and jailed because he was accused of plunder, a non-bailable offense.

She appealed to the people to "let the force of reason and sobriety prevail."

She said the "Filipino people were victimized when government funds were used for private purposes."

"They deserve justice, and this is what the decision of the Sandiganbayan is all about. It is all about justice," the President said.

She added that "politics is not, and has never been the bone of contention" of the issue.

She stressed that "it is not the poor being oppressed by the rich, or the rich trampling the rights of the poor, which is at stake in the plunder cases," she said.

What is at the heart of the issue, she said, is that crimes were committed and "no amount of oratory can alter this or gloss it over."

"In the meantime, let the trial begin. The court is the proper venue, since the trial of Joseph Estrada is neither a political matter nor a class war," she said.

And since the "judicial processes have begun," she said, they should "proceed without delay, without any rancor, without any inflammatory rhetoric."

Sin

The arrest, Tiglao said, was the start of the government's program to seriously go after corrupt officials.

"From this day on, people will say that if a Philippine president can be arrested, (you can be, too). That's the message being sent—better follow the law," he said.

Jaime Cardinal Sin hailed the arrest while appealing to Filipinos "not to allow this turn of events to be reduced to a class war among our people."

"The wheels of justice are moving. This is good for the nation, good for the people and good for the former president also," Sin said in a statement.

"Let us face this case with clarity of mind and charity of heart," said Sin, a longtime critic of Estrada and a key player in the downfall of two presidents.

Sin said he was praying for Estrada, as well as his supporters.

Desierto B-day

Call it coincidence, but Estrada was arrested as Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, who had filed the plunder charges against him, was celebrating his 66th birthday.

While Estrada was holed up in his residence in North Greenhills in San Juan as a last-ditch effort to evade arrest, Desierto was busy partying with his friends at his office on Arroceros Street in Manila.

Desierto greeted the arrest as a "welcome development," and said that prosecuting Estrada was the best way to cap his 28-year career in government service.

"There is not a better way to end my public service career than to prosecute a former highest official in the land and ensure that he will be punished for his sins against the Filipino nation," he said.

Desierto's seven-year term ends in August next year.

The Ombudsman treated his guests and personal friends to a simple lunch of fish, mixed vegetables and *lechon*. He also served red wine, Estrada's alcoholic beverage of choice while he was president.

When asked in jest if Estrada's arrest was a gift to him from the Sandiganbayan, Desierto said: "There's nothing to it (the timing of the arrest). It's purely coincidental."

Erap allies

Former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara was quick to condemn police authorities for what he called their "excessive display of police power" in serving Estrada's arrest warrant.

Angara likened the arrest to a "military operation" due to the presence of the Marines.

"The issue is not crowd dispersal. The issue is, do you have to use such force? This is not some hardened criminal, or someone resisting arrest," Angara said.

But his fellow opposition senatorial candidates who were campaigning in Tagum City in Davao del Norte at the time of the arrest yesterday did not find fault with the action of the police.

Angara joined former defense chief Orlando Mercado in calling for "sobriety" even as their fellow opposition candidates, Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile called for civil disobedience to protest Estrada's imprisonment. *(Story on Page A1.)*

But Angara for the first time agreed with Santiago and Enrile that Estrada's arrest would bolster the opposition's chances at the May 14 polls.

"Before I wasn't certain but now I'm definite it will generate sympathy votes for the opposition," he said.

Military

Military officials who withdrew their support from Estrada during People Power II also welcomed the arrest as "a good sign."

"It's a step forward for justice," said former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat, chair of a government agency in charge of the development of Poro Point and Camp John Hay.

As a retired officer, Abat first made the call for the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police to withdraw their support.

Retired Lt. Gen. Adelberto Yap said Estrada's arrest "is proof that the present government is serious in its agenda of good governance."

But former AFP Chief of Staff and now Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes refused to comment on yesterday's arrest.

Reyes' press aide said the former military chief had no desire to comment on the criminal cases facing his former commander in chief.

In a separate interview, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said the arrest "is a logical consequence of Edsa II . . . where the people together with the AFP told their president to leave his office after he was accused of serious crimes."

Militants

"The next logical step is to prosecute the deposed president and allow the public to witness his trial," Bayan and its party-list ally Bayan Muna said in a joint statement.

"The victory belongs to the Filipino people," Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo said. "This is a triumph of People Power II over an aggressive clique who wants to undo People Power II through sheer mob rule and fake uprising."

"The Filipino people should take full credit for this," added Kilusang Mayo Uno chair Crispin Beltran. "It was the people's determination that convinced the courts that Estrada deserves to (be jailed) for his gross betrayal of the people's interests."

The Konsensya Mindanao 2001, a coalition of Muslim and Christian groups from Mindanao, also hailed the arrest.

Its chair, Nash Pangadapun, chose a Hindu concept to express the groups' approval, saying that "karma has finally overtaken the ex-president," whom they hold responsible for the government's "all-out war" in Mindanao that they claimed devastated their lives.

The militant party-list group Sanlakas called on Estrada to grab the opportunity to act "presidentially" by confessing to his crimes.

Wilson Fortaleza, Sanlakas national president, said that instead of insisting on his innocence, Estrada "should spill the beans . . . In his confession, he should bring all his cronies down with him by incriminating them in his sworn statements. After all, they are all party to the conspiracy of plundering the nation's coffers. They all deserve the 'comforts' of a jail cell," he added.

Another human rights group lambasted Estrada's speech prior to his arrest, saying, "If he actually wrote that speech, he must have been on to something harder than he ordinarily drinks."

In a prepared speech he read over radio station dzBB, Estrada insisted that he was innocent of the criminal charges against him, and boasted of the achievements of his administration.

MILF

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front said Estrada's arrest was a very welcome development because it proved that the government is sincere in going after crooks.

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the government should prove that it is sincere in its fight against corruption by vigorously pursuing the case against Estrada.

"We hope this would not become like the cases filed against the Marcoses," Kabalu said.

In Marawi City, Samira Gutoc, convenor of the Mindanao Youth for Peace and Development, said Estrada's arrest in a way was the Muslim's revenge for his anti-Moro policy."

But Davao del Sur Gov. Rogelio Llanos decried the manner in which Estrada was taken into custody.

"He was treated like a criminal. He pledged to surrender but they were just too eager to serve the warrant," Llanos, a known Estrada ally, said.

Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat said Estrada did not deserve to be arrested.

"I know the man. He was sincere in his development efforts for Mindanao when he was still the president," she said.

"No matter what happens, Zamboangueños still sympathize with Estrada," Lobregat said.

In Cebu and Aklan, anti-Estrada groups were elated over the news.

But Bishop Emeritus Antonio Fortich appealed to Estrada supporters to stay calm and let the law take its course.

Negros Occidental Gov. Rafael Coscolluela said Estrada's arrest would send a message to the world that in the Philippines the wheels of justice were moving.

"We hope, however, that the wheels of justice move quickly and eventually result in a resolution of the cases filed against the former president," he said.

In Cotabato City, Eric Tanod-tanod, a law graduate of the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, said that up to his last minute as a free man, "Estrada was still lying." ***With reports from Dona Pazzibugan; Michael Lim Ubac, Carlito Pablo, Juliet Javellana, Jerome Aning, Christian Esguerra, Gerald Lacuarta; Allan A. Nawal, Jowel F. Canuday, Ayan C. Mellejor, Jonathan F. Ma, Edwin O. Fernandez, Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Ma. Diosa Labiste, Carla P. Gomez, Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Connie Fernandez, PDI Visayas Bureau; Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AFP***

Miriam refuses to jump

(From page A1)

as Joseph Estrada was hauled off to jail yesterday.

"I lied!" Santiago said with a laugh when reminded about her bold declaration Monday that she would jump out of a plane without a parachute if police succeeded in arresting the ex-president.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, Santiago said that the declaration was just a "rhetorical technique."

"That's always the way I talk. It's my way of saying (the arrest) should not take place. These are, of course, rhetorical techniques," she told the INQUIRER.

Asked by a reporter to comment on the call of some senatorial candidates of the administration's People Power Coalition for her to keep her word, she said: "*Ano sila, sinusuwerte* (What are they, lucky)?"

Santiago, who is running for reelection under the banner of the Estrada-backed Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa, let loose with another "rhetorical technique" at an LDP-PnM rally in Mati.

She challenged members of the anti-Estrada camp to a fistfight, and promised to take out all their teeth in the process.

Text messaging again went on high gear as news of Estrada's arrest spread.

One said in Taglish: "Erap arrested. Be careful, all you people outdoors. Miriam might fall on you!"

In Santiago's native Iloilo, the messages flew fast and furious: "Question: Will Miriam now jump off a plane? Answer: Flying or parked?"

PPC senatorial candidate Joker Arroyo phoned the INQUIRER main office in Makati City to reiterate his stand against the death penalty and to pose this question: "Why would Miriam die ahead of Erap, and supposing Erap is acquitted?"

Santiago hurriedly flew back to Manila aboard a Philippine Airlines flight that left Davao City at 6:30 p.m.

She decided to skip the last leg of the LDP-PnM's Mindanao sortie in Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte tomorrow to be able to visit her disgraced friend and *compadre* in jail.

Shooting at Luneta

Reporters caught Santiago just as she was about to leave the Grand Regal Hotel in Davao City for the airport.

After making light of her threat to jump out of a plane, she cited her other threat to have herself shot at the Luneta if the PPC senatorial candidates made a 13-0 sweep in the May 14 elections.

"I'll really have myself shot if it's 13-0. But I'll choose who will do the shooting—(President Macapagal) Arroyo or FVR (Fidel Ramos)," she said in Filipino.

"I want them personally to shoot me at the Luneta if 13-0 is posted on election day. I will be very happy to call the media and present myself for an untimely and unnatural death, provided that my assassin would be either Arroyo or FVR or both," she added.

Santiago and other LDP-PnM candidates Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Edgardo Angara, Orlando Mercado and Jamby Madrigal were in Mati when Estrada was arrested.

The five candidates pushed through with their rally in Tagum City in the afternoon before Santiago and Enrile decided to skip today's campaign schedule and head back to Manila.

From Tagum, the candidates, including Santiago, were supposed to take a helicopter to return to Davao City.

But to the surprise of even her fellow candidates, she decided not to board the chopper and instead traveled by land for the one-and-a-half-hour ride back to Davao City.

Some reporters who were expecting to interview Santiago in Tagum commented that the senator could have recalled her declaration about leaping off a plane.

Civil disobedience

Santiago and Enrile have been hyping the idea of an "Edsa III."

In a well-attended rally Tuesday night at the Rizal Park in Davao City, the two exhorted the crowd of about 5,000 to re-install Estrada as president.

"In the elections, the outcome will not just be 13-0 (for the opposition) but 15-0, because we will include a vice president and the true president whom we'll return to Malacañang," Santiago declared.

In a news conference yesterday morning before the order for Estrada's arrest was issued, Santiago openly called on supporters of the ex-president to resist his arrest and incarceration.

"As a lawyer, not as a senator, I call on Filipinos to participate in civil disobedience against a regime that can no longer be described as democratic," she said.

"I say, Amen!" Enrile said.

Santiago said she no longer believed in the judicial process. "Our judicial system is already biased against the accused. In that case, if the warrant is issued, I'm certain that this will precipitate civil disobedience," she said.

She also said she reached the conclusion of a biased judicial system after the high court ruled on a 1988 case involving her last week.

The high court ruled that Santiago used her position as senator to evade a preventive suspension order from the Sandiganbayan for a graft case filed against her.

But in its 15-0 decision, the high court threw out the graft case itself.

"What's the purpose of the Supreme Court to devote its time and energy to make a ruling that is considered moot and academic?" Santiago said.

"So (even the) Supreme Court (is campaigning against me. If (it) can do that to someone like me, (it) can do that to the president (Estrada)."

Enrile warned of severe public backlash following Estrada's arrest.

"If you ask me if there'll be a social explosion, my impression is we're moving into a delicate political situation," he said.

Sobriety

But Mercado tried to defuse Santiago's and Enrile's statements.

"There's reason for us to go slow and have a sense of sobriety from all sides," he said, adding:

"We're in a critical stage. Emotions are high. I believe it will serve us well if we take our steps carefully," he said.

Former first lady and LDP-PnM senatorial candidate Luisa Ejercito did not attend the news conference.

But during the rally, she assailed the Macapagal administration for supposedly harassing her and her family.

She did not come out outright to call for civil disobedience, but pointed out that the "thousands" who had camped outside the gates of North Greenhills, San Juan "don't want Erap taken" and "don't want Erap jailed."

"Do you want (Erap jailed)?" she asked the crowd.

After lambasting the PPC candidates for supposedly waging a campaign of "hatred," Ejercito reminded the crowd to vote for the entire LDP-PnM slate.

"Vote straight Puwersa. But don't vote for Erap, vote for me," she said in Filipino.

During the rally, the host started chanting "Edsa III!" The cry was immediately picked up by the crowd.

Santiago smiled and made a number three sign with her right hand.

Enrile told the crowd to vote for the pro-Estrada candidates as a show of support for their deposed leader.

"In your heart, Erap is still your president, so shout it out so the generals, the rich, the Makati Business Club and the Supreme Court will hear you," he said in Filipino.

"Our request is that you use the force (*puwersa*) of the ballot," he added.

Enrile also said he would call for a "revolution" if the administration would cheat in the elections.

Other candidates Reuben Canoy and Jamby Madrigal also urged the crowd to fight for Estrada.

"Edsa III will start here," Madrigal said in Filipino. "This is the time to be a hero. If the people are this true, (the authorities) cannot arrest Erap. We will be the ones to arrest them."

On the other hand, Mercado and former Sen. Santanina Rasul refused to take up the pro-Estrada theme of the rally.

Rasul, who was at Edsa during People Power II, did not mention Estrada and concentrated on urging the crowd to vote for a senator from Mindanao.

Mercado, who was the last to speak, defended the Estrada administration's all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. ***With reports from Ferdinand O. Zuasola and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Ma. Diosa Labiste, PDI Visayas Bureau***

TICKING TIME BOMB

Experts fear population explosion

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE POPULATION explosion is a ticking time bomb that could worsen unemployment and make it much more difficult to eradicate poverty, economic experts said.

They were reacting to news that the country's population had reached 76.5 million at the turn of the century from 68.6 million in 1995 and was continuing to grow by an average of 2.36 percent a year.

Based on this trend, the population is expected to double in 29 years, putting the government under even greater pressure to raise funds for social infrastructure and create more job opportunities.

"This is so astonishing. We were expecting that the (annual population) growth would be somewhere between 2.1 to 2.2 percent," said Gunther Hecker, the country director of the Asian Development Bank.

Strain on labor

"Overall, this is not a good development because sooner or later there will be new entrants to the labor market," Hecker added.

The ADB official said that the bank would not be able to help the government with population control measures unless the government itself summons the will to carry out such programs.

He noted that population programs have not been effective over the years because of the strong influence of the Catholic Church, which has always opposed any form of birth control measure other than the natural method.

"In other countries, the ADB has a population control program but we can't enforce it in the Philippines. The initiative must come from the government," Hecker said.

Johnny Noe Ravalo, chief economist and director for policy research of the Bankers Association of the Philippines, agreed that there would be strong pressure on employment in the short term.

"I won't be surprised if unemployment figures rise. We are producing more people faster than we are creating jobs," he said.

He said the government would need to make "huge improvements on the social infrastructure side."

Pension in disarray

"But it's a real ticking time bomb. Today, the profile of the population is young so we won't feel the impact immediately. But over the next 30 years, you'll feel the brunt of it. And the retirement system is in disarray," Ravalo said.

He noted that the pension fund system—consisting of the Government Service Insurance System and Social Security System—will be hard put to cope with the retirement needs of the fast-growing population.

Texting to help voters locate their precincts

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

JUST as "texting" helped summon thousands of people to the Edsa Shrine during the People Power 2 uprising last January, the high-tech phenomenon might just motivate increased citizen participation in the May 14 elections by helping cellphone-carrying voters find their way to their polling precincts.

A private firm authorized by the Commission on Elections to put up an Internet website—the FindPrecinct.com which contains detailed maps of voting precincts—yesterday said voters may also soon be guided to polling places by short-messaging, popularly referred to as "texting."

Omar Mendoza, chief executive officer of Cybersoft Integrated Geoinformatics (Cybersoft), said the service has been pilot-tested and will be made available next week, initially to phone subscribers of Smart Communications which has agreed to link its system to the FindPrecinct.Com database.

Text messaging is a feature of digital mobile phones using the GSM standard, the dominant system in much of Asia and Europe. The service allows mobile phone subscribers to send short written messages to each other, usually within seconds.

Negotiations are still going on with Globe, the other major cellular phone service, to extend the system to its subscribers. Globe and Smart have an estimated combined six million subscribers, most of whom use short-messaging services.

The Philippines is considered the world texting capital. Relatively cheap short messaging, as compared to normal telephone calls or computer e-mail, is understandably popular in a low-income country like the Philippines. More text messages are sent out in the Philippines than in all of Europe, according to telecom officials.

"We're confident that Globe will join the project," Mendoza said.

Cybersoft developed the FindPrecinct.Com website in cooperation with the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and the Comelec. The poll body will provide the firm with read-only diskettes containing the records of 35 million registered voters nationwide.

Through the Find Precinct Project, registered voters will be able to locate their precincts, complete with detailed maps and even pictures of the polling place, by logging on to the websites www.FindPrecinct.com and www.MapCentral.ph.

The FindPrecinct.com website was launched at the Club Filipino yesterday with Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo becoming the first to use it to locate his polling precinct.

After 46 years, love letter arrives

SAN FRANCISCO—Nearly a half-century ago, James Bracy scrawled four pages of love-laced prose to his young wife, dropped the letter at the post office on his Army base, and forgot about it.

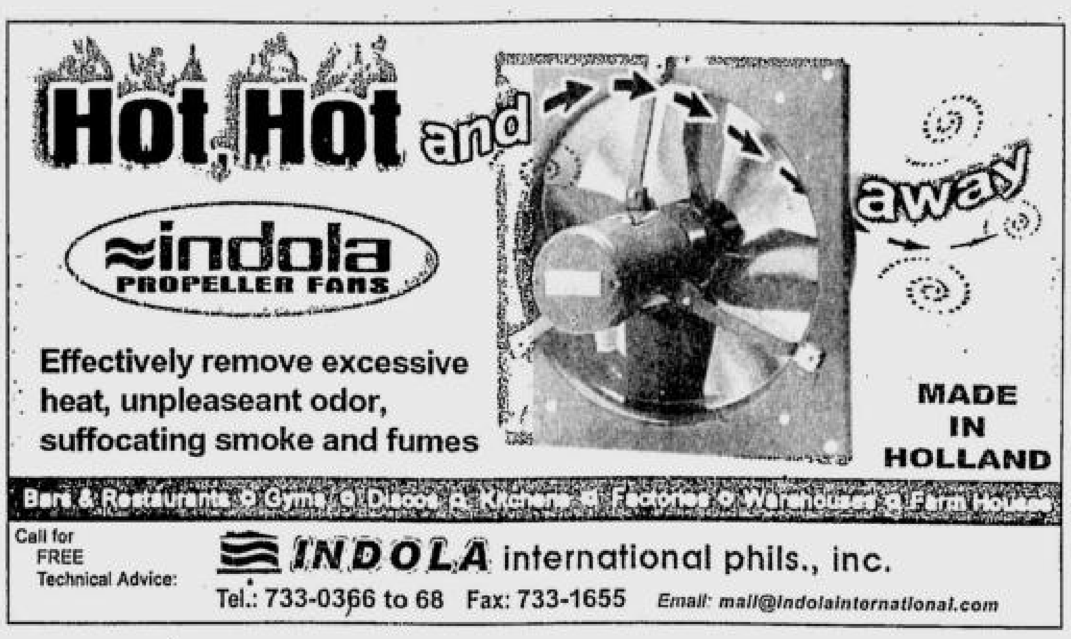
So, too, did the US Postal Service.

Last month, 46 years later, the letter was finally delivered.

"It meant a lot to me then. It means even more now," Sallie Bracy, now 68, said Tuesday from her home in Chesapeake, Virginia.

The letter, dated Jan. 28, 1955, had been lodged between two walls in a mail room at Ford Ord, a decommissioned base near San Francisco.

Last month, a construction crew dismantling the building found the letter, along with four others written by members of the Army's 41st Signal Battalion. The crew turned the bundle over to Bob Spadoni, the postmaster in nearby Monterey. He sent the mail to Virginia, Texas, Wisconsin and California. *AP*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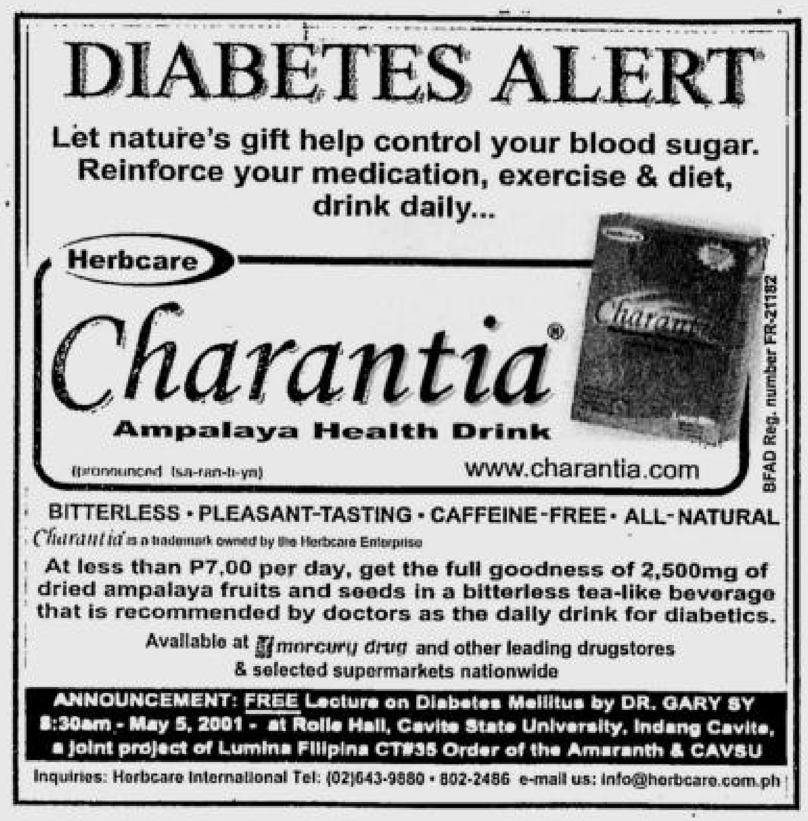
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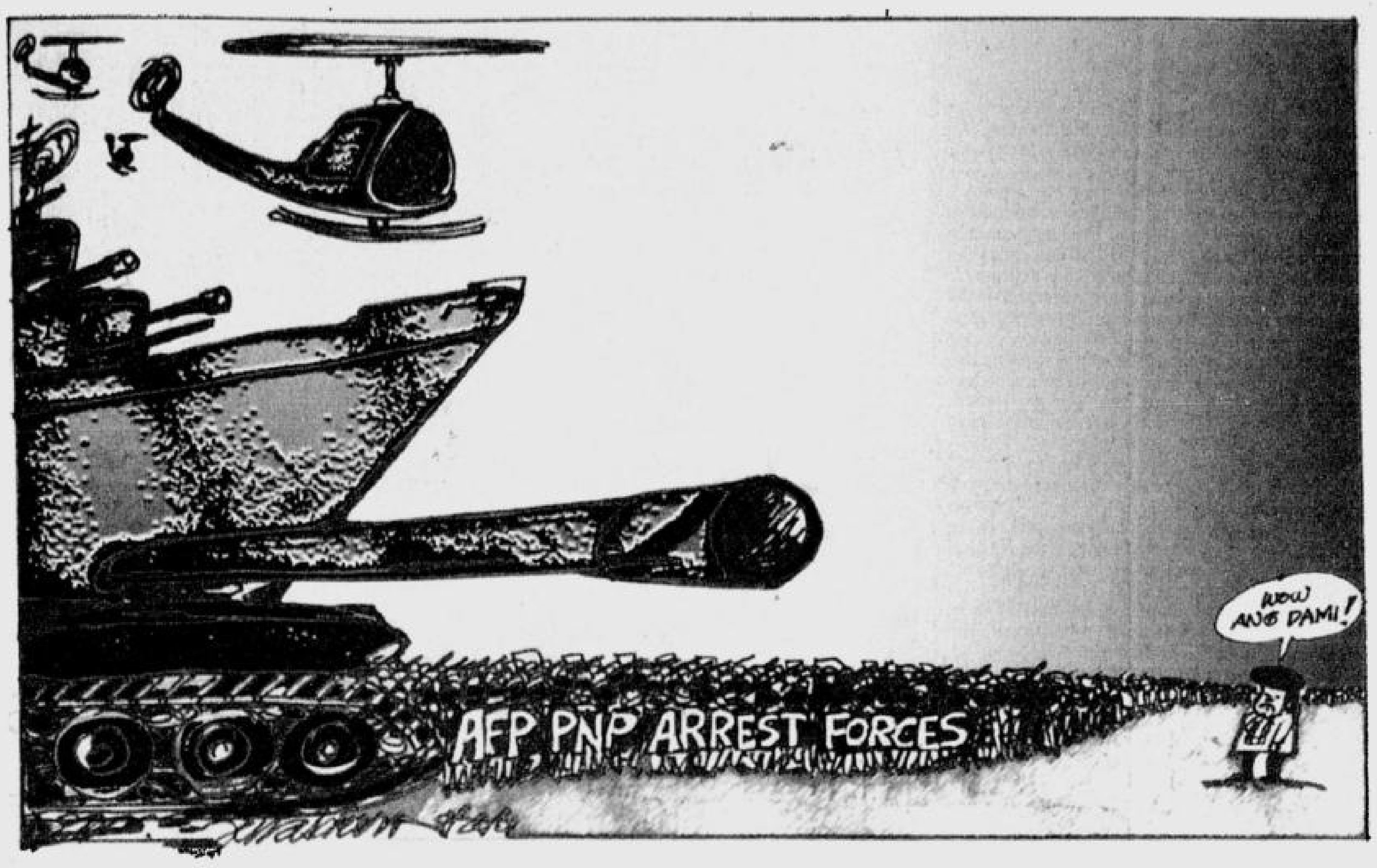


The arrest

EDITORIAL

AND so it comes down to this. For the first time in our short history, a former president of the Republic is under arrest. Whatever happens now, in the courtroom and in the streets, it is clear that the nation has just crossed a threshold. We hope the crossover leads to greater political maturity.

But let us not deceive ourselves. The potential for backsliding is great. As easy as slipping an agent provocateur into the middle of an angry crowd, yesterday's milestone can be turned into an occasion to indulge in politics of the worst kind.

The trenchant pronouncements from pro-arrest groups in the last few days, scoring what they deem to be an interminable delay in the issuance of the arrest warrant and then calling the integrity of the members of the Sandiganbayan into question, may simply stem from impatience. But it could also be caused by intolerance.

Yesterday, on GMA 7, the spokesperson of the lawyers' group CLEAR took the police to task for sitting on their haunches, instead of forcing the issue. If this were an ordinary case, he implied, the police would have simply barged into the house. Other critics of the Sandiganbayan slow drag have shown a similar lack of appreciation for the circumstances in which the Philippine judicial system now finds itself—about to try a former chief executive, surrounded by thousands of rabid supporters, in the middle of a heated election campaign.

Now that the arrest has been effected, these get-Erap-and-damn-the-torpedoes advocates will be tempted to act triumphalist in the extreme.

But the backsliding into political immaturity can also come from Estrada's supporters.

In the days leading to Estrada's arrest, the lawyerly rhetoric from his defense team struck a starkly different tone from the sloganeering of the die-hard supporters who had massed in the thousands near the ousted leader's residence in Greenhills, San Juan. There is no need to send in the troops, the lawyers said, Estrada will "surrender voluntarily." But the crowd that gathered at Greenhills mixed that signal completely.

That the Estrada camp is quite ready to play the *masa* card—it is doing so in the present election campaign, running on a rich-versus-poor, us-versus-them theme—can only make an already volatile situation even more uncertain.

Predictably, Malacañang has described the arrest as "a historic moment." It sounds like propaganda, but it is right on target. At the very least, it demonstrates that the government can summon the political will to put the big fish, as the quaint law-and-order phrase goes, finally behind bars.

To be sure, Estrada's jail time is only detention, not incarceration. He is still innocent until proven guilty, which is what his trial on the non-bailable charge of plunder is all about.

But the arrest of a former president, even if only for detention, is without precedent in our history. That it has happened, following what Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena earlier called the "natural and automatic" course of a judicial finding of probable cause, is cause for celebration.

As INQUIRER columnist Randy David has written, Filipinos live in a social order that is based on the awe and fear of power. In such a social order, an arrest of the magnitude of Estrada's is nothing less than a breakthrough, an attack on the mind-set that holds that "the word of the boss is the law."

In the beginning, the Macapagal administration wanted to avoid the problem altogether, by letting Estrada decide whether to leave the country or stay. If he had taken the bait, the new administration would not have had to risk the violent displeasure of people who took Estrada's word as law.

But over the last three months, the administration has both consolidated its hold on political power and come under unremitting pressure from the children of People Power II. Finally, last Tuesday, during her weekly news conference, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gave the word that must have sent the wheels of justice spinning. Asked whether it was better for Estrada to be arrested now, she simply said yes.

The government must be commended for creating the right environment that allowed the Third Division of the Sandiganbayan to issue its most controversial warrant of arrest, What happens next is up to the officers of the court.

Opposition

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLIN Drilon was asked the question in a TV interview. If people voted 13-0 in favor of the People Power Coalition, didn't he worry that the Senate would not have any opposition? Didn't he worry that there would be no one to scrutinize the actions of government?

Drilon answered that there wasn't anything to fear. The People Power Coalition candidates belonged to different parties and many of them did not exactly see eye to eye with the government, or at least not in all aspects. And many of them had shown the stuff they were made of during the impeachment trial. They were not people who would stand by and do nothing in the face of perfidy out of a personal debt. If they saw something wrong in the Macapagal administration, they could be expected to rail against it.

Not a bad answer, but the anxieties remain. Fanned in no small way by the so-called opposition, who are the Puwersa ng Masa candidates. Juan Ponce Enrile has capitalized on the idea and has presented himself to the voter as the guardian of the public weal in the face of seemingly monolithic power. "*Bantay ng bayan*" is his catchphrase, which however is not without monumental irony, he being the one person most associated with that other phrase, "*dagdag-bawas.*" I hear him using the word "*bantay*" and my brain involuntarily supplies the other word, "*salakay.*"

But that is how he presents himself, as guardian, as defender, as scrutinizer of the government. As indeed do his other confreres in Puwersa, Miriam Defensor-Santiago chief of them. "Kampiyon ng Constitution," she proclaims in her ads, the implication being that she would not allow the government to flout the highest law of the land. Which is not without monumental irony either, she being the one person Erap relied on to thwart the Constitution when it got in the way, not least in the Visiting Forces Agreement. One person, quite incidentally, wrote me to say Miriam has just given us a compelling reason to vote 13-0 for the PPC candidates: she vows to have herself shot at the Luneta if that happens.

I myself have always found the concept of "opposition" in this country a very strange animal. Before martial law, when there were only two real parties vying for power, the word was automatically appropriated by the party that was not in power. When the Liberals were in power, the Nacionalistas called themselves the opposition. When the Nacionalistas were in power, the Liberals called themselves the opposition. What grievous iniquity were they opposing? Nothing more or less than that they were not in power.

Today, when there are many parties vying for power, the word is open to appropriation by the closest competitor of the party in power. Which in this case is the Puwersa ng Masa. Enrile and company have already seized the word. What grievous iniquity are they opposing? Nothing more or less than that they are not in power. Or more to the point, nothing more or less than that they have been thrown out of power.

For all its seeming 24-karat glow, the word "opposition" in this country is in fact wrapped in dross. It has a very cynical tradition. Since one's opposition is purely circumstantial, one may not only drop it when circumstances change, one may even do the very thing he was opposing when circumstances change.

Ferdinand Marcos was the fiercest opponent of Philippine involvement in Vietnam when he was a senator in the early 1960s. The first thing he did when he became president was to send a Filipino contingent to Vietnam carrying the name Philippine Civic Action Group. Joseph Estrada was not the fiercest opponent of continuing American presence in the Philippines when he was a senator, but he was one of them. He was one of those who voted against the US bases treaty, even conscripting show-biz folk to campaign against it. The first thing he did when he became president was to approve the VFA.

It's an opposition that has a built-in obsolescence, or very short shelf life. Which is to be expected from opposing something from expedience and not from principle. Drilon is right in one respect: Between the kind of opposition Enrile and Miriam propose to muster and the one some of the PPC candidates at least offer, the voter would be wise to choose the second. Or to put the case more strongly, he would be mad to choose the first.

Certainly, I'd take Joker Arroyo to be a more real oppositionist than anyone in the Puwersa ng Masa. Joker campaigned vigorously for Erap in the 1998 elections and ran as congressman under his coalition, but that did not prevent him when the time came to take the lead in prosecuting Erap, calling him the biggest crook to have crawled out of the woodwork since Marcos. That is real opposition, one that is not beholden to anyone, one that is beholden only to the truth. Or since truth is such a big word, one that is beholden only to reasonableness.

The same is true with Bobby Tañada. Bobby campaigned for Erap as well and ran for congressman under his coalition. But that didn't prevent him when the time came from prosecuting Erap for betrayal of the public trust, a concept he knows by heart, the public trust being the one thing he has stood by in his years in public office. That is real opposition, one that does not take blindly to the line one's party is carrying, one that only takes great pride in the good name one is carrying.

Easy to call yourself oppositionist, but what are you opposing? Easy to call yourself a guardian, but what are you guarding against? Easy to call yourself a champion, but what are you championing? The verb is fine, but the direct object is finer. You are merely opposing your being thrown out of power, you are merely guarding against real guardians who want to guard against *dagdag-bawas*, you are merely championing your self-proclaimed God-given right to inflict yourself on the landscape—and so spoil its aesthetics—you are not being oppositionist, you are merely being contrary. You are taking the offensive, you are merely being so.

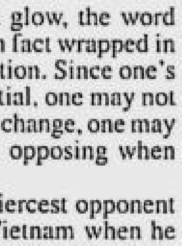
The voters have every right to oppose you.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Vexing Solomon

WINDMILLS



Jerry Barican

JUSTICE, seemingly so simple and yet so complex, rarely satisfies the human mind. Hamlet, a king's son, rails against the law's delay in his soliloquy. Job questions the divine version of justice and is rebuked by the Almighty. The texture of modern life would tax the legal skills of a Solomon.

King Solomon, taking on the guise of the preacher, or Ecclesiastes, warns us of the difficulty of judgment: "for in much wisdom is much vexation, and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow." What vexes the nation at this time is the subject of justice for presidents.

No one in his right mind can be against such a concept. If presidents are not accountable to the law, how can we call to account pedicab drivers who go against the traffic flow or jaywalking pedestrians? What then becomes of a Constitution but to be a sarcophagus of our liberties? Truly, as Richelieu noted, nothing so upholds the law as the punishment of those whose rank is equal to their crimes.

If that was all there was to it, then this column could end here. However, to the overarching principle that justice needs to be done, and be seen to be done, we come across practical problems involved in translating these into reality. To find out what constitutes justice, we turn to the concepts described by a Father of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas, in "Summa Theologica."

The first concept is that absolute justice must be done. Crime must have punishment. If a person is proven to have committed an unlawful deed, he must be held to account for it in law. Kill unlawfully (that is, not in self-defense or in war) and your life is taken from you either literally in the execution chamber, or figuratively, with a life sentence.

The next principle is that there must also be relative justice. It would not be just to see one man executed, a second spending time in jail, and a third exonerated for doing the exact same act under the exact same circumstances. No person should be favored in the law but neither should he be disadvantaged. All in the same class (adults, juveniles) need to be treated equally; on the other hand, all who are not in the same class (the sane, the mad) should be treated differently.

Furthermore, we need to have procedural justice. Even the guilty must be accorded due process. Sham trials and kangaroo courts repel us even when the guilty end up being punished. Procedural due process, if disregarded, ultimately threatens the innocent and the guilty alike.

Finally, all these concepts of justice must conform to the mandates of the law because precedents are more powerful and dangerous than dynamite. These sometimes conflicting problems bedevil us in the case of Joseph Estrada. For it is possible to have absolute justice without procedural justice, or procedural without relative justice, and so forth. The key question then becomes whether in a case as highly politicized as that of the former president ideal justice can be truly met.

It is difficult to fathom where all this will lead us. If Mr. Estrada is indeed guilty, it would be difficult to argue that he should not be accountable simply because he was president. But he and even others unsympathetic to him have raised other troubling issues, perhaps only postponed after the elections, of the culpability of other high public officials. Does it uphold the majesty of the law, or its equality, to jail Mr. Estrada and not hold any others to account?

Indeed, there is every likelihood that the jailing of Mr. Estrada will increase rather than decrease public pressure for similar zealous prosecutions of all other administrations, from that of Ferdinand Marcos onward. A call to jail one soon becomes another to jail all. How will our society resolve these tensions?

Then there is the matter of procedural safeguards. The appearance of impartial justice is being threatened not only by ceaseless public demonstrations and media commentary, pro and con, but by the recurring spectacle of lawyers and even judges talking to the media. Oftentimes, this is intended to explain a process to the public. But the integrity of the judicial process continues to be undermined by the competing claims of people power and press freedom, to our common peril.

These hard cases consequently are producing bad laws. Fundamental legal principles from hearsay to the exclusion of illegally obtained evidence, hitherto established, are falling by the wayside like billowing hay in the wind cut by scythes. No one wants to see our legal system become indistinguishable in its effect from the town gossips in "Chocolat."

Finally, there is the hatred rather than the sorrow of Ecclesiastes that animates these proceedings. The fall of a president and its consequences on the country are an occasion for sadness, even when justice needs to be done. He who increases knowledge increases sorrow. The calls for justice would be more noble if they seemed to be inspired as much by grief as by triumphalism and sanctimony.

Whether our country can reconcile these conflicting ends, and not just the easy part of securing the incarceration of a former president, will be the true test of how mature our political and legal systems have become. Justice must be done, and done for all. The prosecution needs to convict only by using evidence and procedures that can withstand legal scrutiny. Joseph Estrada also needs to have his fair day in court. Justice without law is a vigilante. Law without justice is a farce. Equal justice under the law, unfortunately, is neither easy nor self-evident. Our lessons in justice are not quite over.

Supreme irony: Erap goes to PAOCTF cell

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WE citizens had long anticipated the arrest of former President Estrada, but when the arrest order was handed down by the Sandiganbayan at 11 o'clock yesterday morning, the episode was still as gripping as ever, with a lot of tension, comedy and pathos. As this column was being written, the negotiations between the Erap supporters, led by former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, and PNP officials were still continuing at the Greenhills residence of Erap over innumerable details. Many hours have passed since the arrest order was handed down, but the actual arrest was taking so long as the police seemed confused about how to carry it out.

The interminable negotiations appear to be typically Filipino: indecisive, *mahina ang loob* and too emotional. But then perhaps the momentary disarray is understandable, as there has been no dry run for arresting a president in this country, unlike in South Korea, where two top leaders have been arrested, or some European countries. Yesterday was a day like no other in the nation's history, and from hereon, the long struggle against bureaucratic graft and corruption enters a new chapter.

* * *

As the nation watched the negotiations drag on, most of us hoped that the deposed president would display some patriotism and surrender to the arresting policemen, in order to avoid violence and bloodshed. In the end, it was time for him to go, and the arresting officers, backed up by riot police and Marines, showed resoluteness. They went to get him and he came along peacefully.

It was the supreme irony for Erap, however, that his first detention cell had to be in the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, the agency that he used to promote his various ends. Before Erap left his house, he repeated his spiel about how despite the 10 million votes he got, he was being persecuted. If this could happen to a populist president, he said, it could happen to anyone. What Erap left unsaid, however, was that he left a trail of alleged crimes, something that the ordinary citizen cannot do.

* * *

What was obvious was the high level of emotionalism of the *masa* supporters of Erap, who seemed to be well-organized. All this, however, was sadly displaced because the deposed leader had obviously disregarded the *masa's* welfare and turned to acts considered by the state as plunder.

Doubtless the arrest will whip up tremendous sympathy among the masses, but this is where the government information machinery should exert all effort to explain the dynamics of the criminal process. The government should explain how the arrest of anyone, including a former president, becomes inexorable the moment prima facie evidence against him is established by the court. From hereon, the courts of law take over—nothing personal here. Explaining all this will help calm emotions and educate the people who may feel that Erap is being "persecuted."

* * *

I was in Bacolod City over the weekend to accompany my husband to the homecoming of his alma mater, the Negros Occidental High School. Aside from seeing old friends, it was also a good opportunity to get a close look at local politics. I was amused at how the posters and flyers of the political candidates seemed to outnumber the leaves in the trees in the city's parks.

During dinner, civic leader Nena de Leon, her daughter Carissa, her husband, lawyer Roseller Maalat, and industrialist Sammy Palanca, who built the new city pier at the reclamation area of Bacolod, gave us a good overview of how topsy-turvy our politics has become under the multi-party system.

* * *

Bacolod City, for instance, has 10 candidates for mayor, five of them serious ones. These are incumbent Mayor Joy Valdez of the People Power Coalition, who assumed office when Mayor Oscar Verdeflor was disqualified because of his citizenship and bad health. Surprisingly, however, Verdeflor refuses to give up, campaigning from a wheelchair. Recall that he sprang a surprise in the 1998 elections when he won over the popular reelectionist mayor Bing Leonardia, who is now bent on recapturing his old post. In addition, there's Bacolod's perennial No. 1 councilor, UP law graduate Renecito Novero, who ran for the lone congressional seat in 1998 against incumbent Rep. John Orola and lost by only 240 votes. This time the Lakas "orig" is running for mayor instead of taking on Orola again. Also running for mayor is Monju Guanzon, son and political heir of the late Rep. Roming Guanzon.

* * *

As for the fight for Bacolod's lone congressional seat, reelectionist John Orola of the Nationalist People's Coalition is the man to beat, but three people think they can do it. One of them is independent candidate Andy Hagad, whose brother Danny resigned as Lakas-NUCD provincial legal arbitration committee chief in protest over reports that Lakas stalwart Joey Rufino distributed funds not only to Lakas candidates but also those affiliated with the opposition group of Danding Cojuangco. Presidential brother-in-law Ignacio Arroyo has denied this. Aside from Hagad, also running for Congress are Monico Fuentebella of the PPC and former Assemblyman Wilson Gamboa.

* * *

The fight for the governorship of Negros Occidental is even more interesting, as outgoing three-term Gov. Lito Coscolluela is backing Vice Gov. Roy Gamboa, and his running mate, newcomer Gregorio Yulo, under their party, Aton. Gamboa and Yulo are running against Mayor Joseph Marañon of Sagay and Mayor Isidro Zayco of Kabankalan, candidates for governor and vice governor, respectively, of the United Negros Alliance, which is affiliated with the NPC. Marañon comes from a political family, his brother being second district Rep. Alfredo Marañon. Coscolluela, who remains popular but who apparently has forsworn politics already, is being criticized for allegedly not allowing Gamboa to emerge from his shadow during the past nine years. But now Roy is on his own against a formidable opponent in Mayor Marañon.

* * *

In the fourth district, Danding's son, Rep. Charlie Cojuangco, is seeking reelection, and the brave soul challenging him is Juancho Aguirre, who was mayor of La Carlota City for 16 years. It's a David versus Goliath fight, for the Cojuangcos have used their wealth to win votes. For instance, bridges have been built charge to future CDFs, but what candidate would do this, if he were not a Cojuangco? Charlie's mom, Gretchen, has been campaigning for him, telling voters that she would convert La Carlota into a "mini-Makati" if they vote for Charlie again. Negrenses point out that Danding apparently has poured a lot of his resources into the province already, running various concerns such as a huge sugar hacienda, fruit orchards and processing and a big cock-breeding farm.

Little drama, much significance

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"DEAR Erap, pls. don't take it personally. *Sana po makulong na kayo para tumalon si* Miriam *sa eroplano ng walang* parachute. *Siya ang habol namin. Sabit ka lang.* Thks."

I'm not kidding, but I got this text message even as I was listening to the radio coverage of the former President's arrest at his Polk Street residence in North Greenhills. Though the reports detailed the grim mood of the pro-Erap crowd and the rock-throwing, shoving and hitting that preceded the arrest, I had to laugh at this "take" on what has to be the biggest news in the country at the moment.

Checking my e-mail back home a few minutes later, my mailbox already contained "alert warnings" for sightings of objects falling from the sky, specifically the power-suited form of a female senatorial candidate.

So, the question must be asked: Was Miriam tempting fate with her grandiloquent challenge, her utter certainty that "her" President would not ultimately face the music? Who can blame the President, who is as superstitious as the average Filipino, if he should blame Miriam for hastening this event?

* * *

FRANKLY, I expected more drama. I was already dreading maudlin footage of Erap's arrest, along the lines of the coverage of his and his family's departure from Malacañang that was accompanied by moving and heart-stirring music. Remember the slo-mo shots as they stepped out of the Palace, stepping into the riverboat and gallantly waving at the people on the Pasig riverbanks? Gimme a break, right?

But instead of sentiment, we got confusion. Especially since, around the Greenhills area, much of the video coverage was from the air, with reporters and commentators trying valiantly to identify the minuscule figures milling around the Polk Sreet compound. Congratulations, though to the GMA-7 cameraman who managed to sneak shots of the former President's processing, as he underwent a physical check-up, stood meekly for mug shots and dutifully had his fingerprints taken. It's a procedure that every petty criminal undergoes at every police precinct, but it seemed weighed with significance given that the person subjected to the drill was once the most powerful official of the land.

Adding poignancy to the occasion was the site of Erap's present detention: the old PAOCTF headquarters. While he was President, Erap had vested so much power on the PAOCTF and its head, now senatorial candidate and former PNP head Panfilo Lacson. Could he appreciate the irony, that the offices of an "elite" crime-fighting unit he had created should now serve as his holding cell? We've heard many things from ex-President Estrada since the charges were filed, but an appreciation of the irony of his situation is not one of them.

* * *

THERE may have been minimal drama surrounding the netting of the "biggest fish" ever to be snared in this country's sputtering efforts to clean out graft and corruption from the government.

But make no mistake about it. Erap's arrest is a watershed in our historical struggle to create a genuine working democracy. We've been making noises about our desire for "good government," for making officials truly "accountable" to the people, for the practice of "transparency" and the meting out of justice no matter who's involved.

Well, this is our chance to prove there's will behind our fighting words. Can this country see a former President haled to the anti-graft court, undergo trial and—perhaps—sentenced for his crimes? Can we steel our hearts and our natural sympathies and wait for the axe to fall on someone who is, admittedly, one of the most popular political figures in recent history?

We bristled when foreign media downplayed the "glory" of People Power II. Now is our chance, especially for the Ombudsman and the Sandiganbayan justices, to prove to the world our collective determination to prove that thievery in government will no longer be tolerated, and that stealing from the public coffers is a crime that deserves the harshest punishment.

* * *

AS THIS is being written, there's news that an unruly mob has descended on the Edsa Shrine, allegedly to fulfill the threat of Erap's lumpen forces to launch "People Power III."

And despite my cynicism, and nausea at the thought of those rowdies in yet another *gaya-gaya* exercise, I must concede that democracy also calls for us to tolerate these troublemakers moved by no other sentiment than a misguided loyalty to a man who shamelessly lied to them and then sought to use them as human shields.

I had to laugh at reports that Erap had apologized to his neighbors in North Greenhills, saying he had not "invited" the crowd that had camped out at the village gate and made it difficult, if not impossible, for the residents to enter the posh subdivision.

But who placed portalets near the gate, set up tents, and distributed food—ensuring that the mob would stay on and further inconvenience Erap's neighbors? Who transported those violent supporters in the first place? Will it be the same people who will now try to stage a mockery of People Power at the "hollow ground" of the genuine thing?

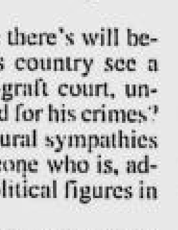
A test for the genuineness of the exercise is the reason for their being there, at the foot of the statue of Our Lady of Edsa. Those of us who rushed to the Edsa Shrine on the evening of the "second envelope" fiasco did so motivated by a righteous anger, as well as concern for the kind of nation our children and grandchildren will grow up in. What moves the mob now gathered at the Shrine? Anger that their "idol" is now no better off than his favorite character Asyong Salonga? Resentment that history has turned against them?

My advice: *Umuwi na kayo. Matamaan pa kayo ng isang pabagsak na senadora.*

PARP: Voice for retirees

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



IF you visit i-site.ph about which I wrote last week, and click open the House of Representatives, you will find out that many congressmen are way past the so-called age of retirement: 60, 65, 70. Yet these people are far from acting retired and many of them relish what seems like the springtime of their lives and the height of their powers.

Of course, retirement from one's regular employment, which is not to mean the human race, can take place any time. It could be by one's own choosing, as required by law or, because of circumstances, forced.

You hear people in their 40s or early 50s say they've gone on "optional retirement," which is another way of saying it had been encouraged by one's employer and one could not resist taking the bonanza of benefits that went with saying goodbye. This means, time to move on to greater things.

Retiring from a job does not mean going to the beach any time one feels like it and having a perpetual suntan. Many retirees move on to a second career, bringing with them the wealth of wisdom and experience and infusing their new endeavors with new energy, vision and, yes, capital.

See, military men retire in their mid-50s and move on to become Cabinet secretaries, elected officials and board directors of this and that. And, not to forget, many sixtysomethings have seen their bylines for the first time in the INQUIRER's High Blood column.

So why do many retirees feel they've been had? After putting in so much into their life's work, not to mention children, what do they get? To be more specific, after plunking in money for social security that should see them through their latter days, they get a below-poverty-line pension that cannot buy them their hypertension and anti-diabetes drugs.

If, as we said earlier, there are many senior citizens in Congress, why have they not done enough for their fellow seniors? Are they on denial? Feeling young forever?

The Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP) is not going to leave issues that concern retirees and senior citizens to their counterparts in Congress. They want to send their own representatives there through the party-list system.

I sat down with some energetic PARP members to listen to their plaint long before the funneling of SSS and GSIS funds to problematic corporations exploded. Many people do not know that the PARP was among the first to demand transparency and for the SSS to bring the issue out in the open. The PARP filed a petition with the Ombudsman.

Many members of the PARP were once corporate bigwigs, or are lawyers and businessmen who know the mechanics of investments and the smell of something rotten. They can live comfortably on their life savings and investments and not bother with miserable social security pensions, but what about the greater majority of retirees who don't have as much?

"To serve as we have served" is the PARP's motto. Borrowing a line from a song, the PARP members look at the task ahead and say with vigor, "We've only just begun."

The PARP, which was founded in 1999, aims to serve the interest of retired persons. Any person who is at least 50 years old is eligible for membership. The PARP has a 10-point program that its members wish to bring to Congress:

(1)Amendment of the SSS law in order to align benefits to the current needs of retirees. The PARP holds that the present average monthly pension of P2,640 which is 65 percent below the poverty level is unacceptable.

(2)Amendment of the GSIS law to align benefits to the needs of GSIS members. The PARP holds that like the SSS, the GSIS is owned by its members who should be the sole beneficiaries.

(3) Total implementation of Philhealth's benefit program to include out-patient services and to expand the operations for the indigent sector.

(4) Put more teeth into the Senior Citizens' Law and punish more severely and quickly establishments that refuse to grant privileges that senior citizens are entitled to.

(5) Seek implementation of the law, long passed by Congress but never funded, granting an additional P700 monthly pension to any veteran who has reached the age of 70.

(6) Rationalize existing benefits for overseas Filipino workers, particularly the unregulated self-insurance scheme;

(7) Amendments to the Labor Code, among them, declaring as illegal retirement by reason of age, and cutting short probationary employment from six to one month.

(8) A law to rationalize the Armed Forces Retirement Program now managed by the Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS). This should avoid the repetition of the RSBS scandal that ravaged the AFP retirement program.

(9) Tax exemption on interest earnings on savings accounts of senior citizens.

(10) Real estate tax exemption for the family homes of senior citizens.

The PARP's three representatives are PARP president Amado Cabaero, PARP vice president and INQUIRER columnist Honesto General (who has written a lot on the SSS/GSIS scam and why voters should reject Estrada's Puwersa ng Masa candidates), and Jose Castillejos from the Visayas.

I don't belong to the sector of retirees and senior citizens yet but we all hope to get there gloriously someday. Not too long ago, I was sent to Kuala Lumpur for a conference on the Aging in Asian Society which was attended mostly by non-seniors like me. We could not help saying that we were really looking at ourselves and our future.

It is said that one of the marks of a truly civilized society is the way it treats, upholds and reveres its aging and aged.

Broke

YOUNGBLOOD

Nikki M. Yu

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

HOW I wish I could just skip a bad day and get on with another one.

So what makes a bad day, you ask? You have a bad day when you're broke. You're broke when you dig into your pockets and all you can find are 25-centavo coins. You're broke when you open your wallet and all you can see is a lousy pocket calendar bearing the face of a corrupt senatorial candidate.

Then you heave a sigh of disgust. First, because you wonder why you kept that calendar at all; second, because you are worried to death because the month has barely started and the next payday is an eternity away.

You'll starve, you think. Then you start having a giant headache and feel like throwing up. You wish the day will soon be over. Being broke just makes me sick.

I'm broke because of sheer stupidity. I'm broke and that is the reason I'm writing this. If I had money, I would be forwarding text messages right now to friends and strangers alike. (Tell you what, texting was so much fun when Erap was still around.) However, I can't afford to buy a P300 prepaid call card, so I can only stare blankly at my cell phone, hoping somebody generous would make *libre*.

I can think of numerous differences between being broke and being loaded.

When you have money, you buy cigarettes by the pack. You would usually take a few puffs on a cigarette and then throw it off.

When you're broke, you buy your *yosi* by *tingi*. And you don't think of wasting your cigarette: you puff on it until your fingertips get burned. You take delight in inhaling its tar and nicotine and sending thin lines of heavenly smoke into the air.

When you've got money, you take a pedicab to the jeepney stop. You pay the driver the fare for two and let him keep the change for humanitarian considerations.

But when you're broke, you forget about taking a pedicab and you don't mind walking to the jeepney stop even under the scorching heat of the sun. Then you protest heatedly to the jeepney driver: "*Mama, kulang itong sukli. Piso pa!*"

When you have money, you and your significant other feel as if the world is teeming with fresh yellow roses and cherry-flavored lollipops. You both think your relationship will last forever and a day. You feel that it's soooo good to be in love and you won't ever wish to let go of the feeling.

But when you're broke, you both easily get into arguments over petty things and you think that your relationship will go kaput in a few minutes.

When you've got money, you act like a smart aleck.

When you're broke, you feel numb and even if you really want to utter something sensible, the words just wouldn't come to your mouth. You start getting alarmed because your jaw is stuck. You force yourself to come up with an idea, but you can't.

When you've got money, trips to the nearby grocery are frequent. You load yourself with bags of your favorite potato chips, the chocolates you can't live without and lots of ice-cold Coke.

When you're broke, you stay in your room and doze off. You don't even entertain the idea of tinkering with your computer because plugging it would mean a higher electric bill.

When you've got money, you call up your friends and plan to get together for dinner or something.

When you're broke, you turn off your cell phone, act like a fugitive lest one of your old buddies see you and demand that you pay her back the one thousand bucks you owe her since you were in high school.

When you have money, you don't seem to notice a church on your way to the office.

When you're broke, you religiously make the sign of the cross each time the jeepney passes by a place of worship. But then you suddenly notice the other passengers speaking in whispers and looking at you like you were a ghost, and only then do you realize you just passed a church of the Iglesia ni Cristo.

When you have money, you feel lazy to report for work. All you think of is taking a few days off and just hanging around with your cuddly feline friend, watching "Teletubbies" and "The Little Lulu Show" on the cartoon network.

When you're broke, you can't afford to be absent and you keep reminding yourself that you won't get paid if you have too many absences. You even have the note "No Work, No Pay" posted on your computer screen. Thanks to the guys who invented post-its. (Who invented them anyway?)

When you have money, you are proud that you are living on your own.

When you're broke, you desperately feel like packing up all your stuff and going home to your parents.

When you have the money, you don't feel hungry because the fridge is loaded with lots of goodies and you can't make up your mind as to what you are going to eat.

When you're broke, you wonder if you need to take Combantrin to get rid of some icky things in your stomach which may be causing you to feel hungry all the time. You search for some food because you are starving, you are reminded of the malnourished of India and Mother Teresa (she's gone, I know), but the refrigerator is bare and you sigh again.

When you have money, all you ever think of is how you will spend it.

When you're broke, you keep cursing yourself for not having saved for the rainy days.

Oh, by the way, I'm broke because I lost my pay envelope—and of course, the Thing that goes with it.

Nikki M. Yu, 21, stopped her college studies two years ago for financial reasons. She works as a disc jockey in an FM station in Tacloban City.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

THEY SAID

Bad model

"What kind of example will she be to Filipino women? She has been tremendously wronged by her husband, who is not only a womanizer but also very corrupt."

—Jean Enriquez of Akbayan Women on former first lady Loi Ejercito

Hypocrisy

"It is so hypocritical of (Sen. Miriam) Santiago, the self-styled champion of the Constitution, to deny the youth their constitutional right of suffrage."

—Bayan Muna-Youth's Leonardo Guevarra Jr. on Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's threat to boycott a session called to pass a special registration law

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PPI

Fit to be fed to sharks

AS the news broke out that the Social Security System admitted losing P8 billion, I could not help but feel outraged. How could the officials who were supposed to guard and protect the money of the people become the same ones who played fast and loose (*"sinalaula at binalasubas"*) with the institution the people will depend on when they can no longer work and need financial help?

How can losses of this magnitude in such a respected institution like the SSS happen? Were the SSS managers so blind, deaf and dumb during the past two years or so?

All these conspirators in using the money of the people so cavalierly must be made to answer the people's outrage. From the highest to the very last of these betrayers of the people's trust, they must be made to pay. Because of their work, the SSS now means Salaulain Salapi ng Sambayanan.

They don't deserve to be shot at the Luneta like the lady senator who thinks so highly of herself. *Isusuka kayo ng lupa ng* Bagumbayan! Perhaps, they should be fed to sharks instead.—**FRED E. RODA, 114 Tuscan Bldg., Herrera Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City**

Family planning a community concern

I AM voting for Winnie Monsod. Nevertheless, I take issue with her on her statement over the radio that the Church is within its right to tell members what family planning method they should use but the government should let couples be guided by their conscience (and nothing else) in deciding how many children they will have.

Making family planning a matter that concerns only the couple is a luxury no country can enjoy forever or for long. When that became government policy, the population growth rate remained stagnant. I suspect it has even grown since the census taking in 1990. If the population growth rate continues galloping, we will get to a point when poverty will afflict more and more people no matter what the government tries to do and the government will be forced to step in with truly coercive measures.

Demographers say the economic growth rate should be more than three times the population growth rate if the benefits are to trickle down to the poor. At the present reported population growth rate of 2.3 percent, economic growth should be at least 7 percent. But with each year bringing more mouths to feed and children to educate, houses to build and jobs to create, we may never anywhere be near the desired goals—of food sufficiency, housing for all, adequate education for the young, free medicines and medical care for the sick and the old.

Before the deluge comes, let couples, whether rich or poor (the rich in fact use up more of the natural resources like water and energy), realize that population control is not a matter that concerns only them and their conscience but the entire community. The rich should set the example (like the royalty in Europe). Rich and poor alike should limit their families to one or two children. That should bring us to the ideal of zero growth.

The government can help make couples decide by showing them the efficiency of the contraceptive methods available and the advantage of one over the other and by giving incentives such as tax cuts for only two or three children and not more, and by meeting the demand of the poor couples for effective contraceptives.- –**NATI NUGUID, 14 Liwayway, Quezon City**

Allegations of bias deserve response from TV network

THIS is my reaction to two articles in the INQUIRER on April 10, 2001. The first was by Belinda Olivares-Cunanan ("Kabayan should respond to Fr. Enriquez's challenge") where "Magandang Gabi Bayan" was accused of not airing a segment about a claim that prominent politicians and a drug lord were linked to a drug syndicate. And the second was written by Rina Jimenez-David ("'Bombshell' turns dud") who said a portion of the program "Isyu 101" was edited to exclude the footage of Fred Lim's and Lito Atienza's exchange of allegations about their links to a known drug dealer.

These two articles mentioned two programs of ABS-CBN. These allegations deserve a rebuttal from the network's management. ABS-CBN via The Filipino Channel is one of the major sources of news and information of Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia and around the world. It is very alarming for us to hear that programs widely patronized and perceived to deliver impartial reports by the OFWs, being on primetime, are accused of favoring the interests of a chosen few.

These issues must be addressed with urgency. ABS-CBN is obliged to make public its position on these issues soonest! If the network should elect to keep mum and let these issues die a natural death, then they cannot blame those who read the articles and those this e-mail would reach for believing that those things really happened. Our trust in the network as an impartial and accurate source of news from home will definitely be eroded.

If these allegations are true, then it is definitely contradictory to the network's recently launched "VOTE FOR ME" campaign where the network tries to convince voters to use their vote wisely on May 14 for the sake of future generations. Moreover, the network is guilty of misleading its viewers about some candidates.

Unless the network can confirm that the allegations are false or sanction those concerned (crew, staff or even the host, its credibility and its other programs will come under a cloud. Its proud slogan—"In The Service of the Filipino"—will also be in doubt.—**JEFF C. DEVILLERES, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Veiled threat in Honasan's campaign poster

WHILE breezing through Metro Manila's almost empty streets last Good Friday, I was struck by the message of one campaign poster which not only lacks originality but also puts the candidate in a very bad light. It reads: *"Alisin ang galit, pagmamahal sa isa't isa...Honasan para sa kapayapaan."*

Perhaps it's time for Sen. Gregorio Honasan's handlers to rethink their campaign strategy. Honasan did not exactly promote *kapayapaan* in the Senate. Many Muslims were massacred. A rift was created among the RAM and guardian members. Disregarding his failed coups in the past, Honasan now threatens the republic with another military adventure should Erap be jailed.

"You'll never get mixed up if you simply tell the truth. Then you don't have to remember what you have said, and you never forget what you have said," said US Rep. Sam Rayburn.

Honasan's campaigners are doing the exact opposite. No wonder many of his former supporters are now saying, "Never again." No way will they be used again by the rumored leader of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' "third force."—**ERICK SAN JUAN, Suite 1402, 1st eBank Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City**

Revising censorship history

IN THE INTEREST of accuracy, allow us to reply to the attempt of Alejandro Roces to revise history.

Roces alleges that "The Last Temptation of Christ" was never banned because "its importation permit was never approved to begin with."

This is linguistic legerdemain. Whatever he means, the film was indeed banned. Its import permit never approved because then Movie and Television Review and Classification Board Chair Manuel Morato had several times announced publicly that he would not approve its exhibition.

Morato's claim in a television interview that he had allowed its exhibition in the University of the Philippines was equally false. "The Last Temptation of Christ" was shown before a class at the UP College of Mass Communication in video form, for which the Video Regulatory Board raided the college in an attempt to confiscate the tape which a member of the UP-CMC faculty owned. Only the UP legal counsel's argument that it had been shown for academic purposes prevented its confiscation. One of the undersigned, Luis V. Teodoro, should know. He was dean of the UP College of Mass Communication at the time.

On the other hand, there was an attempt (we never said it succeeded) to ban "Schindler's List" precisely through the "approval with cuts" that Roces thinks is proof that it was approved for exhibition. Director Steven Spielberg had made it clear that he would not allow the mutilation of his film and would prefer that it not be shown at all. With full awareness of this, the Mendez board approved it "with two cuts." Only President Ramos' decision to overrule the Mendez MTRCB, in response to the public outcry over the film's being censored, enabled Filipinos to see the film and to judge its merits for themselves.

Today the public can judge for itself whether Roces' and Morato's claims are factual—or attempts to hide censorship behind a cloud of technicalities to the recourse of which they are apparently especially adept.

But these are details which do not in any way dispute the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility's opposition to media censorship. As usual, Roces failed to see the forest in his preoccupation with the trees.—**MELINDA QUINTOS DE JESUS, LUIS V. TEODORO, Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2nd Floor, Ateneo Professional Schools, 130 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City**

LETTERS

What is Laya griping about?

REGARDING Bambi Harper's column, "Shenanigans on the cultural scene" (PDI, 4/17/01), what is Jaime Laya griping about?

Is it because President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo through Executive Secretary Renato de Villa has accepted his resignation?

Is it because he wants to cover up the fact that he and Virgilio Almario have been operating without appointment papers since 1998?

Laya's attack on Padilla is rehashed from past arguments. The fact is that Carmen Padilla has been cleared of all charges.

A case has been filed against Laya before the Sandiganbayan and he is on the hold order list of the Bureau of Immigration. Another case has been filed against him and Almario before the regional trial court of Quezon City for usurpation of office.

Why is he so afraid of Padilla's reinstatement?

I have lawyered for Carmen Padilla since 1998 and I recommended Rene Saguisag when I joined the government in 2000. My former law office took over the case in 2001.

I believe in Padilla's cause and will continue to support her.—**ALEXANDER PADILLA, Department of Health**

Pieces of the truth

DESPITE the deluge of downright lies and half-truths about what really happened on March 8, 2001 in front of the Subic Freeport, we believe that only the truth shall set us free.

We have many witness who have submitted sworn statements to the authorities and all are one in saying that:

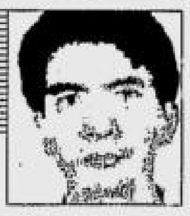
- Bet Marcelo and her group went directly to the picket line in a burst of speed, prompting many to caution her lest her car hit anyone in the crowd.
- Many also said they recognized Marcelo in the car, the journalist who once served in the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and who had written that the crowd was *"bayaran."* Certainly, it was not Mayor Kate Gordon who uttered those words.
- Whoever said that it was the mayor who incited the crowd was either not present or was fed that canard. All witnesses have testified that all that Mayor Gordon said was, *"Sige, paraanin ninyo sila."*
- There was even a quotation from a letter to the editor that Miranda de Quiros was subjected to verbal abuse by the mayor. The truth was that De Quiros was nowhere near the area.

We have kept our peace, knowing that all this is politically motivated. But the deluge is there, prompting us to air our side in the interest of fairness and, above all, the truth.—**MIKE PUSING, public information officer, Olongapo City**

IT is futile to argue with liars. I stand by every word written on the March 8 incident report I submitted to my bureau chief within hours after it happened. The following day, Mayor Kate Gordon herself admitted what she had done when she apologized to me in the presence of a delegation of the Subic Bay Freeport Chamber of Commerce.—**BET MARCELO, correspondent, PDI Central Luzon Desk**

Turtles and passionate books

PINOY KASI



Michael L. Tan

IT'S summer, usually a time when kids have all the free time in the world and decide they want to raise pets. So the family trots off to the pet shop, parents hoping against hope that the kids won't take a fancy to the puppies and kitten. "Look at the smart hamster doing tricks," I overheard one parent the other day. I suspect many parents are hoping their kids will pick up one of these smaller low-maintenance animals that will go off to pet heaven in about a year.

But still I'd be careful with that assumption. These alternative pets don't exactly have short lives. Hamsters, gerbils and mice (they're all rodents) live two to four years while guinea pigs last five to seven years (with some going on to a ripe old age of 10). Those cuddly rabbits average six to 10 years, almost as long as dogs. All these animals reproduce, well, like rabbits. Hamsters reach puberty at 18 days so be prepared to have an entire colony in a year or two.

So, you're thinking now, maybe we should just get some fish. Be careful again. Goldfish can last 10 to 20 years, about the life span of a cat in a good home. And birds? Lovebirds last 5 to 15 years while parrots and cockatoos live as long as people, sometimes even longer. There was a recent news item about a cockatoo in Australia that had lived to be a hundred, which means if you get one now your still unborn grandchildren might end up inheriting it.

And then there are turtles, which seem to be the latest craze. Local pet shops are all stocked up with red-eared sliders (the name comes from the fact that they have red streaks on the side of their head and they're quick to slide into the water when strangers approach them).

My mother bought three of these turtles a few months back, each of them about an inch in diameter. The pet shop owner assured her they were "miniature turtles from China" that would stay miniature forever. I was suspicious and did some research, which included checking out what kind of turtles they were in the first place. Nope, they weren't bonsai turtles; they eventually get to be 12 inches in diameter. I told my mother she'd have to build a lagoon for her turtles. Not only that, I told her she'd have to establish a trust fund for the turtles because they would probably outlive me (the turtles live up to 30 years).

I worry at times about local pet shops and how little information they give on the proper care of the animals they sell, especially the less traditional ones like turtles. Veterinarians can't be too helpful either because vet schools mainly train you to handle farm animals, plus dogs and cats. In the case of my mother's turtles, I had to research on its diet (they're carnivorous, but will manage quite well on vegetables and fruits), living conditions (they need to be able to wade in water, but also need dry land and exposure to sunlight), social habits (they love the company of other turtles, and often stack themselves one on top of the other). I even had to read up to figure out their sex: males have long front claws.

I wasn't too happy when my mother got the turtles since she already has a menagerie of five dogs and four cats but I'm beginning to find the turtles quite interesting. Biologists will find this heretical but from years of raising different kinds of pets, I can say that all animals, including mice and turtles, actually have distinct personalities. My mother's four turtles (it's a long story how three became four) includes two social climbers who come out to greet every visitor, one very maternal male turtle who gathers the other three under its carapace when night falls, and one Zen geek who tends to sit alone on a rock, medjtating.

These alternative pets can stimulate the budding biologist in the family. Encourage them to observe the finer details of these animals' lives. Of course, pets in general allow you to teach kids how to be responsible but in the case of these non-traditional pets, you can also explain what responsibility and commitment mean in relation to the animals' long life spans.

Be aware of some of the precautions to take with these alternative pets. Younger kids tend to get a bit rough handling these pets and some of these animals, hamsters for example, will snap or bite.

There are also a few public health considerations. Turtles can harbor Salmonella infections, which is mainly passed through meat (especially chicken), so keep them vegetarian. As an added precaution, wash your hands before and after handling the turtles, and always use gloves when cleaning their living quarters.

I don't know. With all that hassle, I'd just go for a dog or cat.

* * *

You might want to stock up on some "passionate" books to read while your kids clean out the hamsters' cages. The Ateneo de Manila University Press (Bellarmine Hall at the Loyola Heights campus, Tel. No. 4265984) is offering a 15 percent discount on several of its Passion books until the end of this month. Included in this special sale are Reynaldo Ileto's "Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines," now into its fifth printing. Vicente Rafael's "Contracting Colonialism," which looks into how language was used in the conversion of Tagalogs to Catholicism; and a reproduction of the 18th century Tagalog text, "Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Christo" by Gaspar Aquino de Belen. My favorite from among the books on sale is Fenella Cannell's "Power and Intimacy in the Christian Philippines," which deals with popular religiosity in the Bicol region.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

Memories of a good friend, Bubby Dacer

"WHAT a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable in action, how like an angel in apprehension, how like a God—the beauty of the world."

The above passage is from Shakespeare's "Hamlet." It fittingly describes my very good friend Bubby Dacer and this is my tribute to him.

I met Bubby many years back. Once in the 1980s I saw him in Los Angeles and he accompanied me shopping. Thereafter, we frequently communicated. Back in Manila, he organized a PR office, first at a small room located on the ground floor of the Manila Hotel. Much later he transferred to a bigger space on the third floor of the same hotel. Everything in his room—the pieces of furniture, telephones, even the rest room—was in sparkling white. I have never seen Bubby in colored shirt and pants. He was always attired in white. During the state visit of President Fidel V. Ramos to Germany, Bubby was so visible in white—suit, tie and shoes—and it was nearing autumn and everybody was in dark suit.

Once he was smitten by the beauty of Miss Switzerland who came to Manila for the Miss Universe contest. He in fact went to Switzerland to trace her and requested me to introduce him to people I know. I did precisely that. He met some Swiss lawyers and even the district attorney of Zurich who at that time was helping me in our Marcos wealth recovery efforts. Bubby must have impressed them as they often asked me about him.

Bubby was such a nice person and a friend to all. He would invite people to the Champagne Room of the Manila Hotel for lunch. I frequently joined his group.

The last time I saw Bubby was at the Makati Shangri-La French restaurant. We had lunch with another good friend, Dante Calma. It was a welcome lunch hosted by Bubby as Dante and I had just arrived from abroad.

Bubby was such a great help to me when I was solicitor general. When I needed him to correct certain inaccurate reports in the press, he would oblige. I also sent him reports or releases from Canada when I was ambassador and also important matters for our public to know about the work of the UN Law Commission at Geneva and New York where I sit as member. And he did this for me *gratis et amore*.

Goodbye, Bubby. It was so painful reading about reports on how you were abducted and killed. Yet, only the perpetrators of this heinous offense had been apprehended and the principals or those who induced others to commit the crime are still free. These principals by inducement whoever they are, must be identified and suffer the consequences of their crime.

I hope that the murder of Dacer and Corbito will not end up like the Aquino assassination, with the real authors of the crime not having been named or identified to this day.—**RAUL I. GOCO, 5 Tenth St., New Manila, Quezon City**

Law catches up with Erap but not with the Marcoses

THE LONG arm of the law seems to have quickly caught up with ousted Philippine President Joseph Estrada but the family of the late deposed dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who allegedly stole billions, continue to evade arrest.

The arrest and jailing of Estrada for the serious charge of economic plunder on Wednesday is widely seen as the Philippine government's way of ensuring that his case would not drag on for years like the Marcos cases.

Both Marcos and Estrada were toppled by massive street protests amid accusations that they looted state coffers to enrich themselves, their families and their cronies.

The Catholic church, the military and middle-class protest groups all played key roles in toppling Estrada in January this year and Marcos in February 1986.

Estrada faces charges of illegally amassing more than P4 billion ($80 million) during his term in office from 1998.

But Marcos, who is believed to have stolen more than $10 billion, was never arrested because he and his family fled overseas as he was being overthrown.

In exile in Hawaii, they were safe from criminal charges since Philippine law does not allow charges in absentia.

Government lawyers point to the failure to charge Marcos soon after his ouster as one of the reasons his cases have gone unresolved.

Marcos and his allies are believed to have played a role in the series of coup attempts against his successor, Corazon Aquino from 1986 to 1989.

Aquino, fearing destabilization attempts, refused to let Marcos return home, leaving him to die in exile in 1989.

In contrast, when Estrada was toppled, the government swiftly barred him from leaving the country.

A special wealth-recovery agency, the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), has recovered P79 billion of Marcos money and assets and in the early 1990s managed to have about $540 million of Marcos money in Swiss accounts transferred to a Philippine bank.

With interest, this amount has now grown to $642 million, pending a legal settlement on its ownership.

However, no allies or relatives of Marcos have been jailed for corruption and there are widespread suspicions that the Marcos camp has billions more stashed abroad.

The Marcos family, which was allowed to return home in 1991, swiftly regained much of their old influence. A Marcos daughter sits in Congress while Marcos' son is governor of their old home province, making them a force to be reckoned with.

The evidence of Estrada's alleged crimes is also much stronger than Marcos as a key ally of Estrada publicly squealed on him when he was still in power.

The House of Representatives impeached Estrada in November last year for alleged graft and in a subsequent trial in the Senate, numerous witnesses came forward with accounts of his alleged wrongdoings.

Many of these witnesses will be testifying in Estrada's plunder case and more are coming forward as well. *AFP*

Erap's biggest box-office hit

(From page A1)

box-office hits that Estrada had ever made in his former career in the movies, and his fans braved truncheons and teargas to watch reality unfold while other Filipinos across the country followed it on TV and radio.

In the end, at 3:15 p.m., Estrada gave up without a fight.

His supporters watched in impotent fury as the black Ford Triton V8 van carrying their leader left the compound and wove its way slowly through the parted sea of anti-riot policemen and headed toward Camp Crame.

Obviously overwhelmed by the sheer size of the combined police-military operation, Estrada's supporters could only express their defiance with sobs and curses.

They prayed for the wrath of God to fall upon their idol's persecutors, flashed middle fingers at the two choppers circling overhead, and hurled invectives at the Macapagal administration.

"I've never ever cried for my husband, but now I'm crying because of what you're doing to our president," said a middle-aged woman, her face drenched in tears.

"We've had so many government officials who are thieves. Why are they arresting only this president?" cried another.

Posing for mug shots

Later, GMA TV showed exclusive footage of Estrada, dressed in a jacket and a blue shirt with his trademark white wristband that still bears the presidential seal, filling out arrest forms at Camp Crame and dispiritedly posing for police mug shots.

He was made to stand by a wall for his mug shots, and he removed his beige jacket as a police doctor conducted a physical examination.

Estrada lawyers had earlier asked police that he not be displayed in public like a common criminal.

Former Press Secretary Ricardo "Dong" Puno, who joined other opposition senatorial candidates last night in Davao City, said he called up Estrada while he was at Camp Crame.

"Surprisingly he sounded okay. There's no slowing him down. He said he was fine. (But) he felt very strongly that he has been deprived due process," said Puno.

Puno added that Estrada "sounded optimistic" that he would be released soon.

He said he wanted to return to Manila to personally see Estrada, but the deposed leader told him that he wanted the opposition candidates to continue campaigning.

2 dead

Authorities took about four hours to serve the arrest warrant.

Estrada supporters from various urban poor communities who had camped outside the gates of North Greenhills since Holy Week, stalled the entry of police when they started massing at the Madison Street gate yesterday.

Emotions ran high as an estimated 10,000 Estrada supporters, who ranged from tattooed teenagers of Tondo to well-heeled Chinese, gathered in the neighborhood.

Two reportedly died but it was unconfirmed at press time. Several others were injured as the Estrada loyalists fought their way into the subdivision, where the former president was picked up by Director General Leandro Mendoza, chief of the Philippine National Police.

Mendoza was backed by top PNP officials, the PNP's Special Action Force and reinforcements from the Philippine Army and Marines who stood guard around the seven-vehicle convoy that would bring the ousted leader to the Camp Crame.

A gate facing Ortigas Avenue saw the first violent clash between anti-riot police and Estrada supporters around noon.

Around the same time, another group of about 300 Estrada supporters managed to force its way into the village through another gate along Buchanan Street.

The Estrada supporters managed to break through the gates of Buchanan Street despite teargas and water cannon attacks from the police guarding Madison Street, where one of the two demonstrators reportedly died.

The second group served as Estrada's last line of defense, as the supporters blocked the intersection leading to Polk Street.

Between noon and 2 p.m., anti-riot police and a contingent of Marines, all armed with truncheons and firearms, gradually took positions along the undefended portions of Polk and Buchanan.

An ambulance and two fire trucks were also on standby.

Mad at media

The crowd by then was already venting its anger on local and foreign print and broadcast journalists. GMA 7's Arnold Clavio and Maki Pulido were forced to leave their positions just outside the Estrada driveway as Estrada supporters shoved, taunted and hit them with empty water bottles.

The INQUIRER saw many of the men in the pro-Estrada crowd carrying sticks with nails protruding at the tip. One ID-bearing supporter of senatorial candidate Loi Ejercito proudly rattled a steel chain.

By then, negotiations for Estrada's peaceful arrest were already going on between PNP chief Leandro Mendoza and former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno inside a white Toyota parked near the Madison gate.

Before the fall of the Buchanan gate, the Estrada loyalists were running after running priest Fr. Robert Reyes, who for the first time was seen sprinting away from a protest rally rather than toward it.

Reyes and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez were guests at the Ciudad Fernandina forum in Greenhills yesterday morning when the Estrada supporters closed in on them and angrily waited for them to emerge to pounce on "the one sent by the devil."

The two boarded Golez's Ford E150 after more than an hour of hiding inside the restaurant. The protesters pelted the Ford with stones and broke the back windshield.

Not budging

Police team leaders, headed by Eastern Police District Director George Aliño, appealed to pro-Estrada "marshals" to step aside and let the arrest party through.

The crowd didn't budge.

At 1:30 p.m., two Estrada lawyers, former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa and Cleofe Versola, arrived at Polk in a police vehicle to see their client. The Estrada partisans cheerfully opened a path for them.

At 2:15 p.m., Aliño had exhausted all diplomatic means and finally issued the order for about 100 truncheon-wielding cops to disperse the crowd.

The clash was fierce, but over in less than five minutes. A scuffle ensued and a few Estrada supporters threw rocks at the shield-bearing anti-riot police.

But the police overpowered and drove much of the defiant mob back to the Buchanan gate.

Another team of policemen numbering nearly 200, this time armed with automatic rifles, made the final move to secure Polk. Empty water bottles, small rocks and even wooden planks thrown by Estrada supporters flew as the team made its way forward.

No shots were fired during the whole event.

By 2:30 p.m., Marines were already posted at the Estrada residence's gate. From there, the armed policemen formed two columns to clear a path for the vehicles that would carry Estrada to Crame.

Five vehicles carried the former first family and its closest supporters through the streets of San Juan.

The first vehicle to come out was a white coaster sent by the PNP. In it were Estrada's sons Jude and JV Ejercito.

Five minutes later, a dark blue van carrying Estrada followed by four other vehicles followed.

Seeking comfort

Estrada summoned to his home after lunch yesterday his top-caliber lawyers, former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, Rene Saguisag and Jose Flaminiano.

The former actor sought comfort in the company of fellow actor-politicians who stuck by the ousted leader in his last few hours as a free man.

Among them were Sen. Vicente Sotto III and Mandaluyong mayoral candidate Philip Salvador, who was mobbed by the crowd when he came out of the house, along with basketball legend and San Juan Vice Mayor Philip Cesar.

Two of Estrada's closest friends, Caloocan Rep. Luis Asistio and Rizal Rep. Gilberto Duavit, were among the first to drop in at Estrada's house and the last to leave, bringing along supporters who wore Asistio shirts.

The husband of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, former Interior Undersecretary Narciso Santiago, even brought his children along to console the former president, a godfather of their adopted daughters.

From out of the Estrada mansion came food, mostly boxes of biscuits, and mineral water, which sent the crowd and media people covering the event into a mad flurry as they competed for the bottles of water. A hose was also slipped from the gate to provide water for the supporters.

Rice meals in plastic bags were distributed to the crowd, who bombarded the Estrada mansion with cries of hunger and thirst. While some had enough, barebacked men who were on the frontline in the battle with police, apparently were not satisfied.

"*Ano ba ito? Magbibigay kayo ng pagkain, wala namang tubig* (What is this? You give us food, but you don't give us water)!" cried a disgruntled and sweaty man from a truck bearing Loi Ejercito campaign signs, where some of the food was kept until lunchtime.

Picture of gloom

The house at No. 1 Polk Street was a picture of gloom after its master was hauled off to Camp Crame.

Relatives and friends left behind cried unabashedly as they comforted one another.

Although they were obviously grieving the fate of their boss, the cooks and helpers went on with their chores.

No one wanted to answer reporters' questions.

Among the close allies of Estrada who lingered in the house were Sotto, Jun Santiago, Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn, Asistio and Salvador.

Outside however, the defiant supporters vowed to push through with their plan of restoring Estrada back to power through "People Power III."

With nothing left for them in Greenhills, most of the protesters marched to Camp Crame.

Others, however, trooped to the Edsa Shrine where hundreds of thousands gathered in January to topple the Estrada administration. *(Story on Page A1.)*

Estrada supporter Corazon Escamillan said she was a little bit disappointed that Estrada did not put up a fight when the police came to arrest him.

But she said she believed that what Estrada did, in the end, was "for the best."

"I know he did it because he did not want any one of us to get hurt while defending him. That is how much he loves his people," Escamillan said.

With a report from AFP

Market perks up . . .

(From page A1)

confidence of foreign investors and creditors.

"This is a signal to the international community that the Philippines now has a strong and firm leadership that adheres to the rule of law," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao echoed this view, saying the arrest would be favorable to the investment climate.

"That is why at this very moment, the stock market is improving," Tiglao said in Malacañang.

Traders said investors snapped up blue-chip stocks as soon as they heard the news that the Sandiganbayan had issued a warrant of arrest against Estrada.

While the actual arrest did not happen until after the market's closing, the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 18 points to close at 1,462.18.

Romulo expressed the belief that there would also be a positive impact on the peso because, he said, the arrest was "a signal that we are no longer a soft state."

The peso, however, fell to P50.55 to $1 yesterday from P50.415 the previous day. But traders attributed this to developments overseas, like the weakness of the Japanese yen and fears of an impending debt moratorium by Argentina.

"The peso is hounded by external problems and its movement today is not influenced at all by Estrada's arrest," said a currency trader from a foreign bank.

Online stock trading firm 2TradeAsia.com said that while news of Estrada's arrest had failed to boost the peso, local players would likely continue to see bargain-hunting at the bourse.

According to Romulo, the economy should get a lift particularly because Estrada is being charged with economic plunder.

Estrada is perceived to have driven the Philippine economy to a near-standstill last year, with a swollen deficit, lower growth and huge peso depreciation.

The peso fell to a historic low of P54.79:$1 during the outbreak of the People Power II revolution. It swiftly recovered to P47:$1 after Ms Macapagal assumed the presidency.

Early this week, the New York-based credit rating firm Moody's Investors Service retained its negative outlook for the Philippines and pointed to a reemerging political uncertainty as one of the reasons for its judgment.

Romulo said Moody's could be referring to the pending cases against Estrada that were not quickly addressed.

"Now we can show we have a strong political will and stability to apply the force of the law," he said.

Uncertainties

But despite the temporary relief, analysts said political and economic uncertainties would continue to hound the market.

Ricky Trinidad, UOB Securities director for research and business development, said that while the market had earlier discounted the arrest of the ex-president, "it will continue to watch what will happen next."

Trinidad pointed out that the plunder charge against Estrada continued to divide the citizenry, and that the clear-cut scoreboard would be the results of the May 14 elections.

He also noted that economic uncertainties were still weighing down on market sentiment. For instance, he said, structural reforms would have to be made to address the high level of bad loans and real and other properties acquired by the local banking system.

Luz Lorenzo, head of research of ATR Kim Eng Securities, said she hoped that the market's rebound would not be a mere knee-jerk reaction to Estrada's arrest.

The market was trading indecisively in the market yesterday until news of the issuance of the arrest warrant pulled it out of the doldrums.

"The market's ability to stay above the 1,400 support level is encouraging," said AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan.

"The Phisix's movements have been showing some intra-day strength. While we're expecting small rallies to continue, it's really too soon to say whether it will sustain such an uptrend or it will be just rallies from which we will eventually encounter profit-taking," he said.

Vistan added, however, that it remained uncertain whether yesterday's rally was indicative of a bottom.

"To confirm a bottom, the market needs an impetus to create more volume and volatility. We continue to be cautious on the local market. Lingering concerns over the outcome of the elections and the health of most companies will continue to hound the market. We don't expect broad-based buying in the market because of these concerns," he said.

Among the blue-chip firms that benefited from yesterday's rally were the Bank of the Philippine Islands, SM Prime Holdings, Meralco B, Ayala Land Inc. and Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co.

Law enforcement

Romulo said the Philippines had been criticized for not enforcing laws and regulations against powerful members of society.

"The arrest is a good signal that we mean business this time, and this should help restore investors' confidence in the country. Now, we are showing the world that our law applies to all," he said.

Gonzalo Bongolan, assistant vice president at PCCI Securities, said putting Estrada in jail was a welcome signal that the Macapagal administration had no sacred cows.

"It is a powerful message because a perennial complaint against the Philippines is that we have no level playing field and we favor the rich and powerful," Bongolan said. *With an AFP report*

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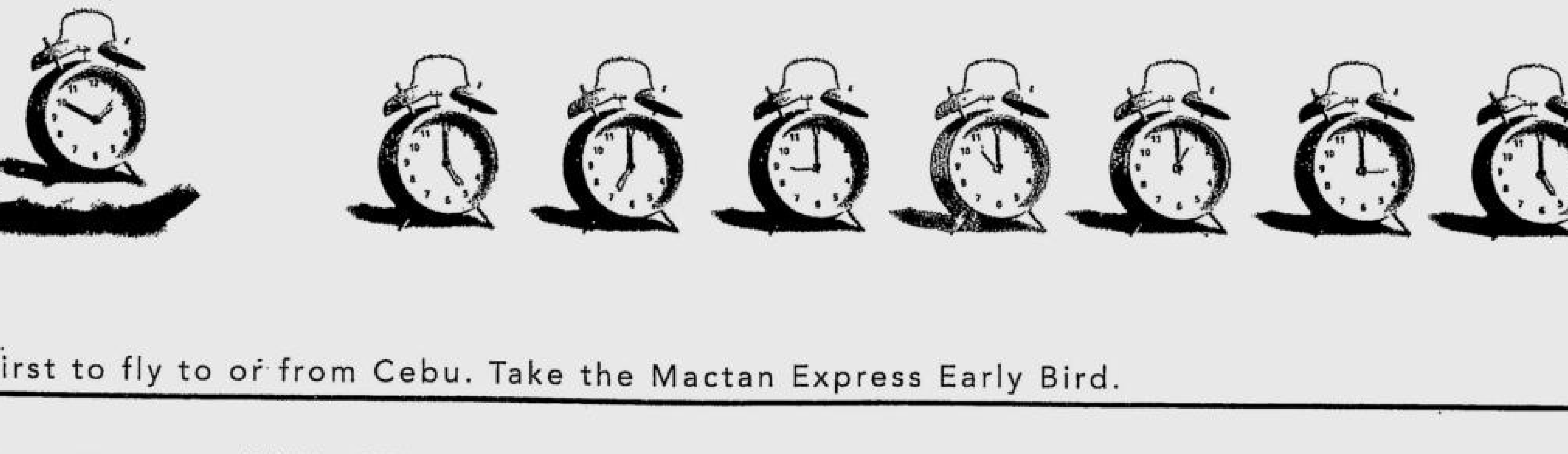

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Koizumi fills key Cabinet posts

TOKYO—Junichiro Koizumi, set to become Japan's next prime minister after winning the ruling party's presidential election, filled key party posts yesterday on the eve of his Cabinet's launch.

"The appointment of the three posts shows the conventional factionalism has changed," Koizumi told reporters early yesterday.

Party veterans "will eventually understand I am serious" about breaking off faction-ridden politics, he said.

None of the three top posts of his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) went to members of the largest faction, led by former premier Yoshiro Mori and his closest LDP race rival Ryutaro Hashimoto.

The 59-year-old reformist named former LDP policy chief Taku Yamasaki, 64, as secretary general, promoting him to the party's number two post.

Koizumi also appointed economic and fiscal policy minister Taro Aso, 60, who who fought Koizumi in the LDP election, as chair of the Policy Research Council.

Former international trade and industry minister Mitsuo Horiuchi, 71, became chair of the decision-making General Council.

The LDP formally approved the appointments at a party meeting, an official said.

The three posts are important as they influence the course of the government's economic and other policies, given the LDP's dominance in parliament.

Yamasaki, a small faction leader known for close ties with Koizumi, told reporters hours before his formal appointment: "I feel very tense as I must support Mr. Koizumi's reform and help him execute it."

Horiuchi vowed to work for the harmonious running of the party machine, saying it was "important to reconcile conflicting views and ensure party reform along with a united front ahead of the upper house election (in July)."

The LDP has ruled Japan almost uninterrupted for nearly five decades but in recent years it has faced a series of corruption scandals and been made to battle a persistent economic slump.

Horiuchi leads the fourth-largest faction in the LDP. He initially told his faction members to vote for Hashimoto but changed his mind at the last moment to allow his members to vote for whichever candidate they wanted.

Hashimoto had been tipped as the front runner to replace the deeply unpopular Mori but ended up a distant second with only 155 votes from the LDP's 487-member electoral college on Tuesday.

Maverick Koizumi clinched 298 votes against 31 votes for Aso. A fourth contender, LDP policy chief Shizuka Kamei, withdrew at the eleventh hour and backed Koizumi.

Aso got his consolation prize of party policy chief after Koizumi's overtures to Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Takeo Hiranuma faced "resistance" from his faction, newspapers said.

A top official of the faction, co-led by Kamei and Takami Eto, was "furious" that Koizumi had directly contacted Hiranuma, a rival to Kamei in the same faction, the Sankei Shimbun newspaper said. *AFP*

It's go for space tourist

WASHINGTON—The consortium of countries building the International Space Station (ISS) has approved the flight of space tourist Dennis Tito to the station, Nasa announced Tuesday, ending a lengthy and acrimonious dispute with Russia.

The space agencies of the United States, Russia, Canada, Europe and Japan—partners in building the space station—have given the green light for US millionaire Tito's trip, Nasa spokesperson Kirsten Larson said.

The consortium's multilateral coordination board "has granted an exemption to Dennis Tito," Larson announced.

Nasa officials are scheduled to hold a press conference on the subject later in the day.

Tito, a retired space engineer, has paid $20 million to the Russian space agency to realize his boyhood dream of space flight, thus becoming the world's first tourist in space.

The US National Aeronautics and Space Administration had opposed Tito's flight for safety reasons while the Europeans said they were against it, citing poor timing.

Unofficially, however, Russia's space partners were concerned that cash-strapped Moscow will see the Tito flight as a precedent paving the way for more flights by rich people seeking the ultimate thrill and prepared to pay large amounts of money for it.

In March, Tito's two Russian crewmates refused to take part in a training session in Houston in protests at the opposition to Tito's flight. The Russians complained that the opposition to the flight was a sign of a new hardline policy toward Moscow from the Bush administration and on Monday announced that Tito would travel to the space station with or without approval from Nasa and the Europeans.

Tito, 60, and his fellow crew members, Russian cosmonauts Talgat Musabayev and Yuri Baturin, are due to blast off in a Soyuz-TM32 shuttle Saturday from Kazakhstan's Baikonur cosmodrome. Their return is scheduled for May 6.

Nasa had objected to Tito's trip by arguing that it was concerned about his level of training, noting the possible danger to the lives of the professional cosmonauts.

Tito was originally to have been taken to Russia's Mir space station, but when that orbiter was brought down to its destruction, he was switched to the new space platform. *AFP*

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Bush: US to do what it takes to help Taiwan defend itself

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush, defending the latest US weapons sale to Taiwan, said the United States would do "whatever it took" to help Taiwan defend itself.

In an interview with the ABC television channel only hours after his administration formally announced the most significant arms sale to Taiwan in nine years, Bush was asked if he believed the United States has an obligation to defend Taiwan.

"Yes, we do. And the Chinese must understand that," he replied, adding that the United States would do "whatever it took to help Taiwan defend herself."

Bush's tone was in keeping with his government's rejection Tuesday of China's furious reaction to its arms sale to Taiwan, warning Beijing it must ease its missile threat to the island if it wants to stem the flow of US weapons.

Bush's administration adopted a blunt stance after officially informing Taiwan of the arms it had agreed to offer, as China cranked up its protests against the consignment.

Included in the package are 12 P-3C submarine hunting planes, four Kidd-class destroyers and a commitment to help Taiwan procure eight diesel-electric submarines, which the United States neither produces nor owns.

But the list of items approved by Bush went well beyond those disclosed by the White House, Pentagon officials said, acknowledging that the administration was keeping secret the details of other items in the face of China's response.

Missing from the list was the high-tech Aegis battle management system requested by Taiwan and vigorously opposed by Beijing, preserving future US leverage over China.

A Pentagon delegation led by Fred Smith, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian affairs, briefed a Taiwanese delegation on the package at a three-hour meeting at Fort McNair, an Army base here.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said China had only itself to blame for the sales—which come at a time of high tension between Washington and Beijing, with bitter rows over human rights and a downed US spy plane still simmering.

"The best way to address this issue . . . is for China to take fewer actions rather than more in terms of its military presence across the strait from Taiwan so there is less of a threat to Taiwan," said Fleischer.

"The presence of Chinese missiles across the strait is a reflection of what Taiwan faces and a factor the United States considers in determining what Taiwan's defense needs are." *AFP*

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Taiwan has net advantage over China

By Patrick Baert

BEIJING—Taiwan, the recipient of new major arms package from the United States, already enjoys a net strategic advantage over arch enemy China, even though Beijing is trying to make up for it by pointing an increasing number of missiles at the island.

China looks stronger because it has 2.5 million men under arms, against Taiwan's 380,000, but that superiority is on paper only, foreign defense experts said.

They believe China is in no position to carry out an invasion of the island because of the better equipment and training of the Taiwanese forces.

Another reason is that the Chinese Army, which for decades prepared itself for a Soviet attack, has only in recent years started reorienting itself toward the contingency of an amphibious invasion of Taiwan.

Taiwan and China have been separated since the end of a civil war in 1949, but Beijing considers the island a renegade province and has vowed to get it back, by force if necessary.

Taiwan is ultimately sustained by the United States, which faces the obligation, under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, to provide the island with enough arms to defend itself.

China's strongest card is its nuclear capability, but that advantage is mainly theoretical, since Beijing has vowed not to use it against Taiwan, inhabited by people it considers "compatriots."

Against this background, western analysts estimate it will be at least another five to 10 years before China can begin to tilt the balance in the 130-km Taiwan Straits in its own favor.

Although Beijing has almost twice as many destroyers and frigates as Taiwan, it disposes only about 60 amphibious landing craft, capable of carrying a total of 10,000 soldiers at most, according to figures from the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

As a result, during its giant amphibious maneuvers, the Chinese Army is forced to boost its landing fleets with hundreds of commandeered fishing vessels and merchant boats.

Taiwan has benefited from military equipment imported from the west, whereas China—targeted by a western weapons embargo—has often had to make do with its own domestically produced hardware, often based on Soviet design.

Although China deploys five times as many military aircraft—3,000 against 570—it has no fighter to match Taiwan's 150 US-built F-16s or its 60 French-made Mirages.

That could change, since China has taken delivery of dozens of advanced Russian SU-27 fighters, and is expected over the next 15 years to manufacture 200 SU-27SKs under a Russian license, making the Chinese air force one of the most powerful in East Asia.

To be sure, China could apply other kinds of military pressure on Taiwan short of a direct invasion, by firing missiles against the island or imposing a naval blockade. *AFP*

Sri Lanka troops renew offensive

COLOMBO—Sri Lankan troops launched a fresh offensive against Tamil Tiger guerrillas yesterday at the end of a unilateral truce declared by the rebels, the defense ministry said.

Troops backed by tanks and air cover moved into territory held by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the Jaffna peninsula, a defense ministry spokesperson said.

The offensive came after the LTTE ended their four-month one-sided truce at midnight Tuesday.

Ministry spokesperson Sanath Karunaratne said the pre-dawn offensive was aimed at taking more areas from rebel control and pushing back the guerrillas.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on either side.

Meanwhile, the state-run Daily News quoted President Chandrika Kumaratunga as saying that government forces have reached a decisive stage in their battle against the Tamil Tigers in the island's northeast.

Kumaratunga said military action had paved the way for the government to reach the threshold of peace.

"With an unprincipled terrorist organization such as the LTTE I will not like to comment on peace prospects too prematurely, but we are hopeful of achieving something tangible and constructive in the coming months.

"The door is still not closed to the LTTE to enter negotiations," the president said. *AFP*

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1,600 caught sneaking into Britain

LONDON—British cross-Channel ferry company P and O said yesterday that it had found more than 1,600 illegal immigrants hiding onboard its vessels since November.

They were discovered in checks on P and O services out of Calais, northern France, after the company began employing its own security firm.

"It's been an effective and worthwhile operation," a spokesperson said.

The company is repeating the exercise at Zeebrugge, Belgium, where it has just expanded its Stena Line service to Dover, a P and O spokesperson said.

Separately, P and O said it had carried fewer passengers since the start of the year as many people were deterred by Britain's foot-and-mouth outbreak.

The company said it was unsure about the impact the outbreak would have on long-term trade. Bookings from mainland Europe this summer were weak, while a number of promotional campaigns had already been scrapped.

However, it said it may benefit from more Britons travelling abroad due to the restrictions on travel in the British countryside due to the foot-and-mouth epidemic.

Meanwhile in Southampton, southern England, police were continuing to quiz 113 people after a major operation targeting illegal immigrant smugglers.

Nearly 300 police and immigration officials raided 28 homes in Southampton early Tuesday, arresting 18 people on suspicion of organizing the ring.

They include nine British men, five men and a woman from Poland, a Russian woman, one man from Pakistan and one man from India.

Also held were 95 suspected illegal immigrants—73 men and 22 women aged between 20 and 55, from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Afghanistan. *AFP*

Egyptian-Jordanian peace plan needs improvement, says Sharon

JERUSALEM—An Arab plan for restarting Israeli-Palestinian peace talks needs "improvements" and Israel is sending its foreign minister to Cairo to discuss possible revisions, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said in an interview published yesterday.

Palestinian officials said they object to any changes in the Egyptian-Jordanian proposal, which calls for an end to seven months of fighting and an Israeli freeze on settlement construction ahead of a resumption of talks.

Israeli media said Foreign Minister Shimon Peres would visit Cairo on Friday, but his spokesperson, Yoram Dori, said a date for the trip has not been set. Next week, Peres is to hold talks in Washington with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Israel, meanwhile, enforced a tight closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to try to prevent attacks by Palestinian militants during the back-to-back holidays of memorial day and independence day. The Islamic militant group Hamas, which has carried out a series of suicide bombings, said it had six more assailants ready to strike.

Palestinians have been barred from Israel during most of the seven months. However, in recent weeks, the restrictions were eased slightly, with about 2,000 Palestinian workers permitted to return to jobs in Israel.

Commemorations for Israel's more than 19,000 fallen soldiers began at sundown Tuesday and were to end after nightfall Wednesday, followed immediately by independence day celebrations. On Wednesday morning, Israelis stopped in their tracks as a two-minute siren wailed across the nation in remembrance of the dead.

In an interview with the Jerusalem Post daily, Sharon said Israel was working on revisions of the Egyptian-Jordanian peace plan. "We think it needs some changes and improvements," Sharon said. "I thought it would be a good idea if he (Peres) went to Egypt and explained our position."

Sharon did not say what revisions he sought. However, his aides have said a freeze in Jewish settlement construction in the West Bank and Gaza was unacceptable, and that Israel wants guarantees, and not only promises, that the Palestinians will observe a future ceasefire.

The Egyptian-Jordanian plan calls for a return to negotiations on a final peace deal, while Sharon only wants to negotiate a long-term interim agreement. *AP*

PALESTINIAN relatives of 11-year-old Muhanad Mhareb, who was shot and killed in Khan Younis refugee camp, wail as the boy's body is brought to the house before burial April 24. Israeli troops opened fire on mourners in Khan Younis cemetery on Monday, killing Mhareb and wounding 14 others. REUTERS

Lebanon wants to keep Syrian troops–PM

WASHINGTON—Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri said late Tuesday his government would like to keep Syrian troops deployed in the country "for the time being" despite Israel's withdrawal from South Lebanon.

"Syria played an important role to assure the security and the stability in Lebanon, and they help us rebuild again our Army, our state and also to assure the stability in the area," Hariri told CNN.

When asked if his government wanted Syrian troops to remain in Lebanon, the prime minister said: "For the time being, yes."

He said the Syrians would leave when the Lebanese are confident they can "assure the security and stability in our country by our own forces."

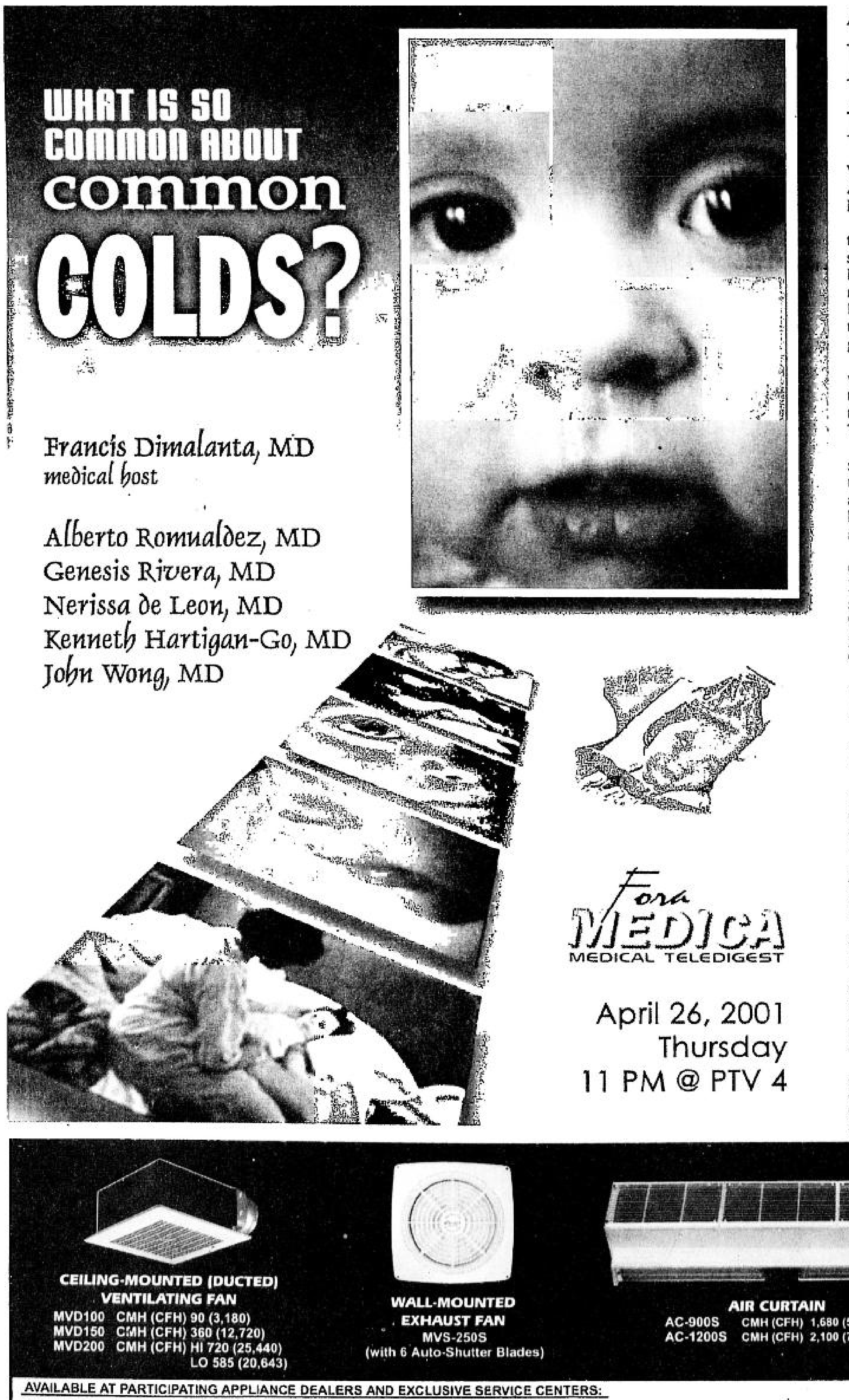
Syria has about 35,000 troops in Lebanon, a presence that affords Damascus significant influence in the country.

Israel withdrew from a narrow security zone it occupied in South Lebanon last year.

Hariri has been criticized inside his country for what is seen there as his lukewarm support for Damascus and its role in Lebanon.

Earlier Tuesday, Hariri met with US President George W. Bush and said he had received assurances the United States would stay "engaged" in seeking Middle East peace albeit through "different methods" than before.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said Bush and Hariri had a "very constructive meeting, reflecting the close bilateral relationship that exists between our two countries." *AFP*



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AFTER SUB COLLISION

Pentagon bars civilians from controls of equipment

WASHINGTON—Civilians can still ride in an Army tank, fly in an Air Force fighter or fire a Marine's M-16 rifle.

The Pentagon barred civilians from being at the controls of military equipment in certain situations after the fatal collision between the Navy submarine USS Greeneville and a Japanese fishing vessel. But aside from that, the Pentagon isn't expected to substantially change the popular guest programs considered vital to good community relations.

"It keeps Americans aware of the people who sign up to go in harm's way and serve their country," Celia Hoke, director of the Pentagon's community relations program, said Tuesday.

"People have said it's all about funding," said Navy spokesperson Cmdr. Cate Mueller of the criticism that the Greeneville trip was aimed at rewarding financial donors. "It's also about hearts and minds—about people connecting with and knowing about their military."

Sixteen civilians were aboard the Greeneville when the submarine rammed the Ehime Maru, a fishery training vessel for high school students, during a surfacing drill Feb. 9 in waters off Hawaii. The crash killed nine people—four teenagers, two teachers and three crewmen.

Navy officials have acknowledged that the surfacing demonstration was done only for the benefit of civilians aboard, three of whom were seated at the sub's controls at the time.

In reprimanding but deciding against a court-martial for the Greeneville's skipper Monday, the Pacific Fleet commander, Adm. Thomas Fargo, said changes are needed in the community-relations program that led to the civilians being on board the Greene-ville.

While he asserted that none of the civilians contributed to the collision, Fargo urged a review of the Navy's instructions for the program, and recommended that civilians not be at key control stations during critical maneuvers, including rapid-ascent drills.

Pentagon spokesperson Rear Adm. Craig Quigley said Tuesday that all the other services were also looking at refining rules for civilian programs. In late February, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld ordered civilians indefinitely barred from operating military equipment, including ships, aircraft and ground vehicles, "when such operation could cause, or reasonably be perceived as causing, an increased safety risk."

The Army, Air Force and Marines have essentially adopted that Rumsfeld moratorium as policy. *AP*

Malaysia judge rules detention of activists without trial is legal

KUALA LUMPUR—A High Court judge on Tuesday dismissed a bid for freedom by five opposition activists being held without trial under Malaysia's tough internal security laws.

Upholding police actions in arresting the activists, Judge Augustine Paul also delivered a strong endorsement of the Internal Security Act under which they have been kept in prison for longer than two weeks.

The act "has the highest objective and purpose to serve," Augustine said, rejecting the activists' assertion that their arrests were illegal and unjust.

The five are among nine people linked to the opposition National Justice Party, or Keadilan, who police have arrested in the past two weeks under the act, which was introduced in the early 1960s to stem a communist insurgency and allows authorities to detain people indefinitely without trial.

Keadilan leaders say the arrests are a crackdown ordered by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's government to stifle dissent and protect him from criticism, while human rights and legal groups say the act is outdated and a fundamental abuse of human rights.

Seven activists, six of them Keadilan officials, were arrested April 10-11, and another party leader was detained at his home on Friday. At the time of the first arrests, police said the activists belonged to a group that planned in 1998 to use explosives in street protests to topple Mahathir.

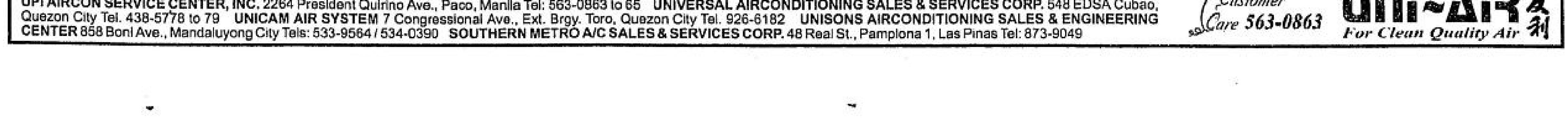
Most of those arrested were organizers of a rally to mark the second anniversary of former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim's conviction on corruption charges.

All of the detainees have been denied visitors, including lawyers.

Anti-government gatherings, once rare in Malaysia, have become regular occurrences since Mahathir fired Anwar from the Cabinet in September 1998.

Anwar, who is serving prison sentences totaling 15 years for corruption and sodomy, is seen as a symbol for the opposition's battle for democratic reforms.

In court, lawyers for the five activists claimed that police had failed to show that the group posed a national security threat. *AP*



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Indonesia steps up security preparations

INDONESIAN soldiers rest atop armored cars in Jakarta April 25, days before a crucial parliament
REUTERS

JAKARTA—Indonesian forces yesterday deployed armored cars and stepped up security preparations ahead of next week's parliament session to decide whether to censure President Abdurrahman Wahid for a second time.

As many as 30 armored cars would be deployed to evacuate MPs should Monday's parliamentary session turn violent as Wahid's supporters have threatened to occupy the house, a military officer said yesterday.

"The armored cars will be used to evacuate MPs from both the lower and upper house," Army Lt. Col. Oka Hendarji was quoted by the Detikcom online news website as saying during a police roll call at the city's Monas park early yesterday.

Tens of thousands of fanatic loyalists from Wahid's East Java homeland have joined a group called the Front for the Defenders of Truth, pledging to defend Wahid "to the death" against any efforts to impeach him.

Hundreds of them have been undergoing martial arts and guerrilla-style training in the jungles of East Java.

The April 30 session appears almost certain to issue a second censure against the 60-year-old Wahid—the country's first democratically elected president—and pave the way for impeachment proceedings by August.

Wahid has warned he may not be able to control his grassroot supporters if another censure memorandum is issued.

At the parliament complex on yesterday, hundreds of elite police mobile brigade (Brimob) troops were seen setting up tents across the huge compound.

They were also setting up portable fiberglass walls filled with tons of water across the back entrance of the complex, as MPs from the lower house met inside for routine business after a three-week break.

"My men and I are trained to face rioters without prejudice . . . if Gus Dur's supporters are coming here to create havoc, we will face them," a police company unit chief, using Wahid's nickname, said on condition of anonymity.

"We will carry out weapons checks and security preparations, and the main building entrance will be our main focus," the company unit chief added.

Police, who have 42,000 men on stand by in case of violence in Jakarta on and before April 30, were seen Tuesday erecting "hospitality tents" for the anticipated flood of pro-Wahid crowds.

On Monday, more than 8,000 police were deployed to check for weapons at major road entry points to the capital ahead of the momentous parliamentary session.

They said they would also be assisted by members of the Banser and Pagar Nusa, the civilian paramilitary wings of the 40-million-strong Muslim organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) which Wahid led for 15 years.

Wahid was first censured by the DPR on Feb. 1 after it endorsed a report that implicated him in two scandals involving some $6 million of state funds.

The report provided no conclusive evidence and Wahid has denied any wrongdoing.

He has also claimed twice in the past four days that 400,000 of his supporters would rise up against parliament if the second censure goes ahead.

But Wahid's opponents have blamed him for failing to curb unrest, carry out speedy reforms or rescue the country from its economic crisis. *AFP*

Rescuers fly to South Pole in small plane in winter

WASHINGTON—A joint US-Canadian air rescue team made history late Tuesday by reaching the South Pole in a small plane in winter time to evacuate a sick US doctor from a research station, the US National Science Foundation announced.

But now they face a similarly daunting task of making their way back.

A Twin Otter plane carrying two pilots, an engineer, a physician and a nurse landed at US Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station at 8:02 p.m. after a daring nine-and-a-half-hour flight from Britain's Rothera Research Station on Adelaide Island off the Antarctic Peninsula.

"I salute the aircrew on this historic and unprecedented flight," said Karl Erb, head of the NSF's Office of Polar Programs.

The flight, which was delayed for two days because of bad weather, represented a milestone in the history of Antarctica's exploration since no pilot so far attempted to reach the South Pole after the onset of dark polar winter, said US scientists.

"No one would normally fly there after February," NSF spokesperson Curt Suplee said.

"The sun goes down in Antarctica in late March and then it becomes really cold," he explained. "They don't start flying back until October."

The mission began Saturday, when two Twin Otter propeller-driven planes operated by Kenn Borek Air, a Canadian aviation firm, flew from an airfield in Punta Arenas, Chile, to Rothera on the first leg of the trip to evacuate 59-year-old Ronald Shemenski from Amundsen-Scott.

Shemenski has been suffering from gallstones and associated pancreatitis.

Doctors say that patients with gallstones, who are not treated surgically, face a substantial risk of recurrence and potentially dangerous complications.

But the rescue crew had to spend two full days at Rothera because of heavy snow on Adelaide Island and strong snow-kicking winds at the Pole.

Current plans call for the plane to begin its return 2,080-km flight with Shemenski on board between 6 and 7 a.m. yesterday.

But Suplee said the departure would be contingent upon the weather both at the Pole and at Rothera.

"The weather is changing very fast there," said Suplee, adding that Twin Otter engines start freezing at minus 75 degrees Celsius.

The temperature at the Pole at the time of landing was minus 68 degrees Celsius, which means the escape margin remains narrow.

But even in these "mild" temperatures, the crew will have to do a lot of work to return their plane, now parked on polar ice, to working condition.

"They will have to heat up the fuel to be able to start the engine and warm up the oil," said Suplee. *AFP*

British police probe claims of Saddam Gulf War crimes

LONDON—British police are probing war crimes allegations made against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein over the 1990/91 Gulf conflict, they said yesterday.

The investigation centers on more than 4,500 Britons taken hostage in Iraq and Kuwait in 1990 at the start of the Gulf War.

Evidence collated by the London-based group Indict, which campaigns for the indictment of Iraqi war criminals, was earlier given to Attorney General Lord Gareth Williams of Mostyn.

Although he concluded there was insufficient evidence to bring charges, he referred the case to Scotland Yard for further investigation.

"These documents are being considered and advice is being sought as to what, if any, further action is practicable," a police spokesperson said.

Ann Clwyd, Indict's chair and a member of parliament for Britain's ruling Labor Party, said there was a sound case against Saddam Hussein and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz.

"Our lawyers tell us that we have got sufficient evidence, more than sufficient evidence, to provide a realistic prospect of conviction of Saddam Hussein and Tareq Aziz on charges of hostage-taking . . . so we are very optimistic," she told BBC radio.

"The deficiency in the Iraqi case is that there is no international tribunal set up by the (UN) Security Council . . . so in the absence of that we have been collecting the evidence.

"We have just three researchers, but over the last 18 months they have collected evidence from all over the world, documentary evidence, video evidence, sworn statements from victims and so on.

"We believe that Saddam Hussein and Tareq Aziz in fact are not immune from prosecution."

When Iraq invaded its oil-rich neighbor Kuwait in August 1990 hundreds of British civilians were trapped and moved to strategic installations as "human shields."

The captives included about 360 passengers on board a flight from London to Kuala Lumpur, which landed in Kuwait just minutes before Iraqi troops crossed the border.

The passengers were held for more than five months. Soon after the invasion the Foreign Office protested at the reported rape of a British woman. *AFP*

Asian companies replacing expats with local hires

SINGAPORE—Asian companies are switching off expensive expats in favor of local hires, according to a survey released yesterday which highlighted a regional shortage of finance and information technology specialists.

In a survey of human resource officials responsible for international assignment policy, 52 percent said they would meet the skills shortage by recruiting from Asia rather than further afield.

Although traditional expatriate transfers continued to make up the bulk of international assignments, the gap was narrowing, said Archie Fraser, an executive with Cendant International Assignment Services which conducted the survey.

Since the economic upheavals which erupted in 1997, "organizations have been turning to 'localized' assignments in an effort to contain the costs typically incurred with traditional expatriate packages," he said.

"These assignments are typically one-way, with compensation at host-country levels and no special allowances for housing, schooling or cost of living."

Fraser said a skills shortage was driving greater international mobility, and companies would need to "recruit and retain their key personnel with greater vigor.

"It is likely, as the economic climate improves in parts of the region, that the skills shortages will increase," he said.

More than 40 percent of the human resource professionals expected their company staff on international assignment to increase in the next five years, with most anticipating a rise of more than one-third.

When asked to pinpoint the area of greatest skill shortage, 23 percent said finance and 20 percent nominated IT. *AFP*

MESSAGE

I wish to convey my warmest felicitations to the dynamic men and women of the Association of **Structural Engineers of the Philippines, Inc. (ASEP)** on their Ninth International Convention.

The role of Filipino structural engineers in the development of vital and strategic infrastructure comes to the fore in a rapidly changing and modernizing environment. This responsibility is increasingly challenged as the country is cognizant of the urgent problems in housing, urban congestion and burgeoning urban population without compromising the structural stability and aesthetic qualities of the many structures built by our structural engineers.

The ASEP has always been at the forefront of change with a commitment to upgrade the skills and competence of Filipino structural engineers. The holding of this convention with the theme, *"Facing the Challenges of Globalization,"* echoes your profound commitment in responding to the socio-economic realities of the 21st century. I laud your efforts in raising the quality of your services and constantly harnessing your technical expertise.

Now that we have triumphed over the political uncertainty that once gripped our nation, we must expedite the healing process to ensure a more progressive society for our people. The government welcomes the efforts of organizations like the ASEP in nation building. I ask you to join me in leading this nation towards greater peace, prosperity and stability.

Congratulations and *MABUHAY!*

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Philippines

MANILA
26 April 2001

Let me convey my warmest felicitations to the members of the **Association of Structural Engineers of the Philippines, Inc. (ASEP)** on their 9th International Convention.

The convention's theme, *"Facing the Challenges of Globalization,"* is timely as the 21st century is indeed the Age of Globalization. Economic barriers are being broken down in almost every part of the world. The influx of foreign products and services into our country is irreversible and to survive, we must stay competitive.

I commend the ASEP in holding this convention of eminent structural engineers. The event will be an opportunity for the participants to learn the latest technological discoveries in their fields of expertise. The knowledge gained will certainly equip them to meet the challenges of a globalized society.

I exhort the distinguished members of ASEP to lend their talents in building our nation. I ask them to propel our economic growth through their creativity and innovations.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

TEOFISTO T. GUINGONA, JR.
Vice President of the Philippines

Manila
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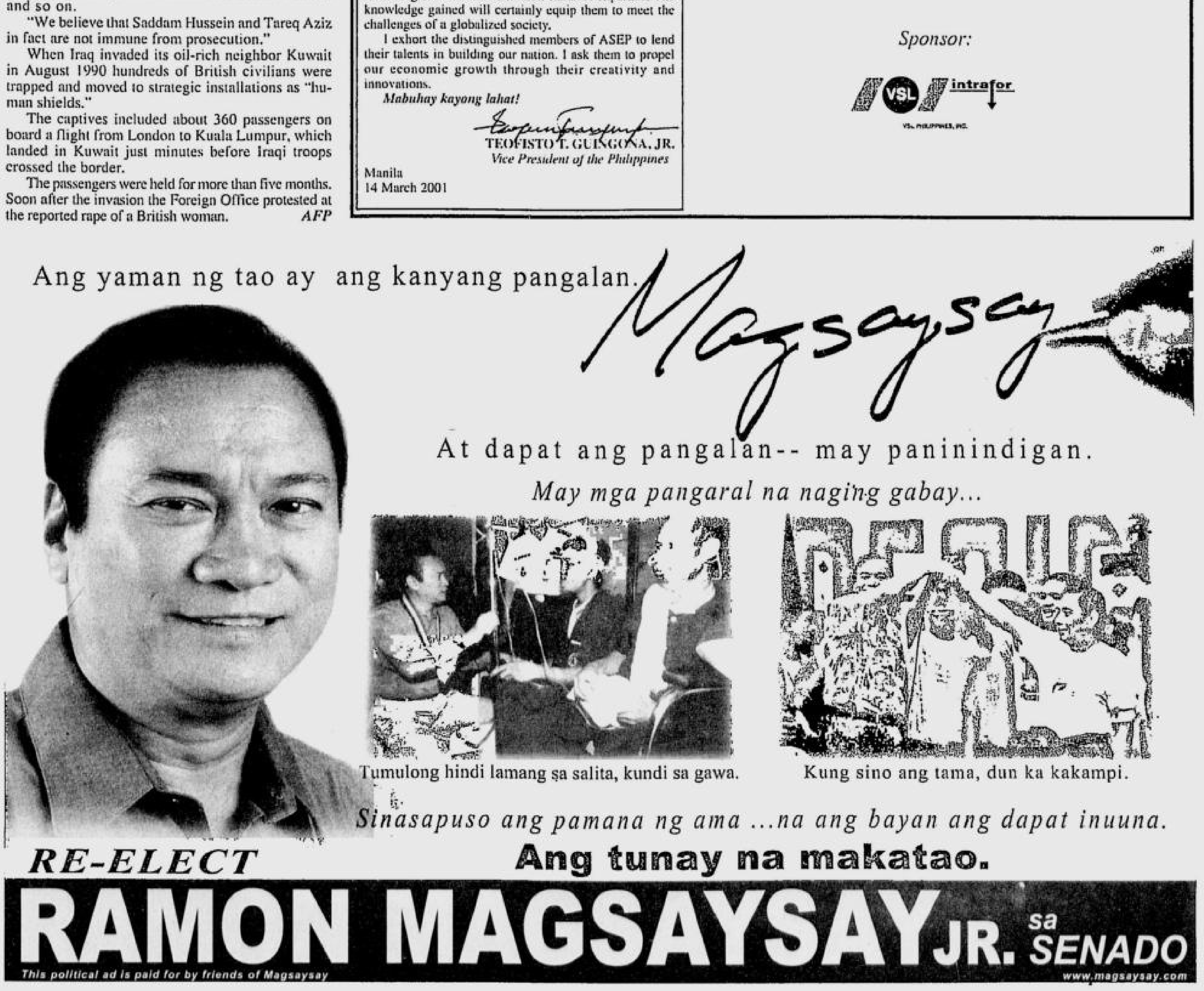

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

ROUNDUP

NPA rebels own attack on cell site

CEBU CITY—The New People's Army owned up the bombing of a Smart Telecommunications cell site April 21 in Barangay Looc, Danao City, 31 kilometers north of here. In a letter, Hans Agricola, National Democratic Front information officer, said a four-man team of the Jovito Plaza Brigade lobbed the explosives that damaged a portion of the cell site's guardhouse. Agricola said the site was bombed because Smart refused to pay revolutionary taxes. Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr., police director for Central Visayas, said the letter's authenticity had to be verified. He said the NPAs might have admitted the bombing for publicity. Based on police investigation, Razon said two drunken fishermen lobbed dynamites after they were scolded by a security guard. *Tonton Antogop, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Bulacan teen killers hunted

MALOLOS, Bulacan—Police are hunting a group of alleged drug-crazed teenagers from Barangay Lugam here who were suspected of killing three men aboard a tricycle early this month. Witnesses pointed to the suspects as the ones who shot and killed Manolito and Gary Mella and tricycle driver Virgilio Cortez. Reynaldo Mella, brother of the Mellas, and Luz Cortez, wife of the tricycle driver, said they were aboard the tricycle but survived the shooting. The victims were on their way to a bus terminal on MacArthur Highway when they were attacked. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

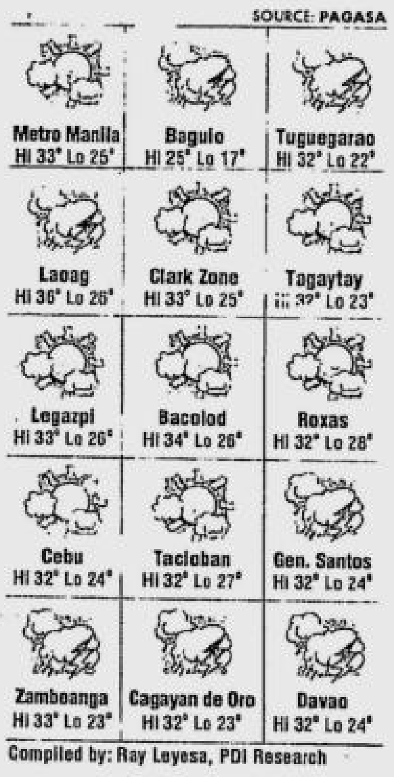
Loi van sideswipes boy in Zambales

OLONGAPO CITY—A van from a four-vehicle convoy of former First Lady Luisa Ejercito sideswiped a teenage boy Friday night in Castillejos, Zambales. Ejercito's convoy was on its way to a campaign sortie in Iba town when the accident happened, reports said. Police identified the victim as Lito Gawat of Barangay Del Pilar in Castillejos. Gawat suffered a fractured leg and was taken to the Iba provincial hospital in Iba town. The van's driver, Dominic Ycot, 35, surrendered to the Castillejos police after taking Gawat to the hospital. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA



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Legazpi Hi 33° Lo 26°	Bacolod Hi 34° Lo 26°	Roxas Hi 32° Lo 28°
Cebu Hi 32° Lo 24°	Tacloban Hi 32° Lo 27°	Gen. Santos Hi 32° Lo 24°
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Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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POLL CROSSFIRE VICTIM

Town police force relieved

DAGUPAN CITY—The police director in Pangasinan has relieved the police chief of Natividad town and 17 of his men after rival candidates for the town's mayoral post accused the local police of being "biased" for either camp.

Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Pangasinan police director, said the heated political rivalry between mayoral candidates Janet Zaragoza of the Lakas-NUCD and Vice Mayor Alejandra Supnet of the Nationalist People's Coalition has forced him to relieve the town's police force.

Zaragoza is a sister of incumbent Natividad Mayor Rowena Zaragoza Bernabe.

Bataoil said he relieved Senior Insp. Benjamin Ocomen and his 17 men as they "have been perceived as ineffective with dealing with (the) two women candidates' complaints against each other."

"To erase the impression that the police are biased, and before the situation worsens, we just decided to relieve them and put new faces there (Natividad)," Bataoil said.

"Caught in the crossfire between the hostilities, the police actually welcomed their relief."

The relieved policemen will be assigned to the provincial police headquarters in Lingayen town. They were replaced by members of the Special Operations Command of the police's regional mobile group, headed by Supt. Ernesto Abuan.

"From April 4 or a period of 20 days, we have received 10 complaints from both camps, accusing each other of harassing each other's political supporters and leaders. One camp would say that they were attacked with an M-14 rifle, then the other would say that a supporter was shot by the rival camp with an M-16 rifle," Bataoil said.

The elections are about two weeks away and more towns are being placed under the Comelec watch.

Seven towns in the Ilocos region have been tagged as "areas of immediate concern" for this year's elections and would be placed under the Commission on Elections, a top police official in San Fernando City, La Union said.

Senior Supt. Arturo Lomibao, Ilocos police director, identified these towns as Natividad, Tayug, Infanta and Bolinao in Pangasinan; Balaoan in La Union; and Sta. Lucia in Ilocos Sur.

He said task forces composed of Army soldiers and Marines and policemen would be sent to these towns under the supervision of provincial election supervisors.

Lomibao said these towns are classified as "areas of immediate concern" because of insurgency, intense political rivalry and election-related violence since 1992.

The classification is a grade higher than those classified as "election hot spots," a term the police no longer use.

The upgrading of Sta. Lucia and Balaoan into "areas of immediate concern" came following the recent killings in the towns, according to Lomibao.

On April 18, reelectionist Sta. Lucia Mayor Teodoro Hernaez was gunned down by suspected communist rebels in Barangay Namatican in Sta. Lucia..

Hernaez, the second official slain in pre-election violence in the province, was killed along with three police escorts.

On April 14, two of eight armed men believed to be supporters of a politician were killed in a shootout with the police in Barangay Butubut in Balaoan.

Lomibao said the police are monitoring the activities of at least 10 armed political groups in four Ilocos provinces.

He declined, however, to identify these so-called "private armies," but he said they would be "neutralized at all costs."

He said mobile police checkpoints are already in place in strategic areas in the Ilocos.

Senior Supt. Wilmer Panabang of the regional police's community relations division said his office is investigating reports that at least 30 people from Abra have been recruited by La Union politicians to serve as bodyguards.

Panabang said the police have seized 83 firearms from four Ilocos provinces since the gun ban took effect in February.

In Pangasinan, the provincial Comelec office and the police have placed eight towns and two cities in the province under their watch. *Yolanda Fuertes and Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Peasant organizer killed

By MA. DIOSA LABISTE
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A community organizer of a farmers' group in Antique was stabbed to death Saturday night after attending a candidates' forum in San Jose, the capital town.

The victim was identified as Precious "Ninoy" Magallanes of Hantique Igkabuhi Center-Hublag Evelio Inc. (Hic-He), a church-based non-government organization based in Antique.

Magallanes was stabbed thrice by unknown assailants. Police autopsy reports said a knife pierced an artery in his heart.

The Hic-He is an affiliate of the Magsasaka at Siyentipiko para sa Pag-unlad ng Agrikultura (Masipag), a national network that promotes organic farming technology.

Georie Pitong of Masipag said the motive for the killing was not yet known. But police in Antique won't dismiss the possibility that it could be election-related because the victim just came from a candidates' forum when he was stabbed.

Magallanes accompanied Juanito Santillan, a farmer leader, to the forum where Santillan was a panelist. The activity was sponsored by San Jose-based radio station dyKA and the Rotary Club of Antique.

The forum ended around 7:30 p.m. Magallanes brought Santillan home in his motorcycle to Barangay Budburan in neighboring Hamtic town, about 15 kilometers from San Jose.

Magallanes stayed for a while at Santillan's house. About 10 p.m., he headed for home in Barangay Nagdayao, Sibalom town passing through Barangays Piape and Buhang, both in Hamtic.

That was the last time Santillan saw Magallanes alive. The victim was found sprawled on a drainage canal in Buhang the next day.

DOLE urged to scrap labor contracting

PEOPLE Power Coalition senatorial candidate Ernesto "Boy" Herrera has urged Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas to scrap a department order that allows companies to abuse the contractualization of workers and to resort to labor-only contracting, an illegal practice that has spawned violations of workers' rights and welfare.

The Department of Labor and Employment's (DOLE) Department Order No. 10, issued in 1997 by then Labor Secretary Leonardo Quisumbing, outlines the guidelines to be used by companies in contracting or subcontracting labor.

It essentially allows firms to use contractual workers but for specific and, in most cases, unusual or emergency situations only, such as a sudden surge of demand for the firm's products, which the company's regular employees could not meet.

"But many companies use the provisions of this order to circumvent the law against contractualization and to justify labor-only contracting, which is illegal. Under laws which I authored in the Senate (R.A. 6715, R.A. 6727) an employer cannot hire as contractual workers who do tasks that are directly related to the company's main business. And after six months of probation, a worker must be made a regular employee," Herrera said in a statement.

HANDS FULL TOOTS SOBERANO

A Philippine Military Academy cadet grapples with Armalite rifles inside the PMA grounds as he performs a task for his upper classmen.

8 killed in 3-vehicle collision in Camarines

NAGA CITY—Eight people died and 17 others were injured when a BLTB bus from Manila collided with a Pajero van and a utility vehicle about 10:30 p.m., Tuesday, along the Quirino Highway in Sitio Anlungan, Barangay F. Simeon, Ragay, Camarines Sur.

Senior Insp. Benito Niño, Ragay police chief, identified the dead victims as Maria Soledad, who was aboard the BLTB bus; Menard Co Say and Cosme Flororita, who were aboard the Pajero van; Ignacio Baldemoro, Casimiro Viñas, Armando Paglinawan, a woman known only as Diaz and a man known as Enong, who were aboard the utility vehicle.

Niño said the BLTB bus was about to cross the Taculago Bridge II when it tried to evade a bamboo that hung from the right side of the bridge.

He said just when the BLTB bus occupied the left side of the road, the Pajero van came, followed by the utility vehicle.

Niño said the BLTB bus collided head-on with the Pajero van and the utility vehicle then rammed into the side of a mountain.

Fe Saquedo, a passenger of the BLTB bus, said the accident came so swiftly and the impact was so great that the Pajero van was almost crumpled.

Saquedo said when the passengers of the BLTB bus disembarked to see what had happened they were horrified to find Co Say and Flororita in the Pajero van decapitated.

She said another passenger of the Pajero van identified as Jojo Laynita miraculously survived the collision.

Saquedo said five of the passengers of the utility vehicle were killed instantly after the collision.

The other injured victims were rushed to the Bicol Medical Center and St. John Hospital in this city.

The vehicular accident was the second this month in the Quirino Highway in Ragay town.

The first happened early this month and claimed four lives. *Juan Escandor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3RD IN 3 YEARS

Vice mayor in another beating case

CEBU CITY—A bicycle-riding paramedic has accused Vice Mayor Renato Osmeña of punching him on Saturday night along Bacayo Street in Barangay Guadalupe this city.

Dennis Rama, 34, a paramedic of the Emergency Rescue Unit Foundation (Eruf), said the vice mayor hit him in the left side of his body.

Osmeña denied the allegation, saying he is not a boxer. "I categorically deny all the allegations, specially the punching. Why would I do that?" he asked.

Rama said he and his friend, Virgilio Reynes, 34, were on their way home from Mabolo, aboard their mountain bikes.

He was about 20 meters ahead of Reynes when he noticed that Reynes was no longer tailing him. So he turned back.

He said he saw Reynes being interrogated by Osmeña beside a red car near the vice mayor's residence on L. Bacayo Street.

When he asked what was going on, the vice mayor allegedly punched him and then said in Cebuano: "What's your business asking? Do not meddle. What about your bicycle, is that registered?"

Reynes told Rama that there was nothing wrong and that Osmeña and his bodyguard were just asking if his bike was registered.

Rama said he and Reynes apologized to Osmeña and told him that they were in a hurry because it was already late.

But Osmeña told his bodyguard to call the Mobile Patrol Group (MPG). Operatives from the Special Operations Section (SOS) arrived first.

Rama said Osmeña ordered the policemen to bring him and Reynes to the police station to blotter the incident and release them afterwards.

When they reached the police station, Rama and Reynes reported the alleged beating.

Reynes said he was tailing Rama when he heard a vehicle blowing its horn and saw somebody peering out of the window telling him to stop. He later recognized the man as Osmeña.

He said the vice mayor stepped down from the car and told them that he was pedaling too fast and that his bike had no signal light.

Osmeña admitted he waylaid Reynes because he was "misbehaving" while he was pedaling his bicycle.

"I was only acting as a father. Something bad might happen to them because they were misbehaving while on their bikes," Osmeña said in Cebuano.

This was the third time Osmeña figured in such an incident.

The first was in February 1998 when he allegedly beat up a taxi driver, Jose Mandawe, over a traffic violation.

In January 2000, the vice mayor allegedly kicked Junard Medalle, 7, who was watching the Sinulog Grand Parade, for blocking the path of dancers inside the Cebu City Sports Complex. *Jhunnex Napallacan and Kathy Navarro, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Kidnappers shoot dead Tsinoy trader

COTABATO CITY—Suspected kidnappers shot and killed their victim, a Filipino-Chinese businessman, as they were being pursued by the police and military in Tacurong City on Tuesday afternoon.

Maj. Julieto Ando, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, identified the victim as An Liong Jao, owner of Jao Tay Marketing, a hardware in Tacurong's commercial district.

Ando said three suspects armed with M-16 Armalite rifles entered the hardware and at gunpoint forced Jao into a waiting Multicab small van with license plate LAW 598.

One of the suspects shot and wounded the hardware's security guard.

Responding policemen and elements of the 47th Infantry Battalion pursued the kidnappers, resulting in a brief exchange of gunfire.

A suspect was wounded in the firefight. He was arrested and is undergoing interrogation.

The others reportedly fled toward Barangay Dalagap in Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat.

Quoting reports from police operatives in the field, Ando identified the leader of the gang as a certain Danny Supok, a former Moro rebel turned bandit.

Radio station dxOM-FM reported that the suspects shot twice the 62-year-old Jao, who was hit in the chest. He died while being treated at the Sandig Hospital in Tacurong City.

Ando said the military has been alerted following intelligence reports that kidnap-for-ransom gangs have been "commissioned" by politicians to carry out kidnappings to raise campaign funds.

Police were earlier alerted for candidates who have criminal records and who may resort to criminal activities to raise campaign funds.

Some candidates were found to have criminal records, although they have not been convicted and jailed. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Candidate for governor faces charges

IBA, Zambales—Gubernatorial candidate and outgoing Zambales Rep. Antonio Diaz is facing charges at the provincial prosecutor's office for allegedly leading the beating of six supporters of his rival in Masinloc town on Sunday.

A police report showed that through the help of his bodyguards, Diaz beat up and hit with bamboo sticks six supporters of reelectionist Gov. Vicente Magsaysay who were installing campaign streamers and posters in the town.

Diaz is a member of the Nationalist People's Coalition while Magsaysay is running under the Lakas-NUCD.

Quoting an investigation report, Supt. Artemio Gabriel, Zambales police director, said at the height of the confrontation, Diaz was said to have shouted, "*Tumakbo na kayo* (Just run)," while his bodyguards were allegedly aiming their firearms at Magsaysay's supporters.

Gabriel identified the governor's supporters as Rommel Garcia, Leo Asuelo, Michael Asuelo, Alex Pascasio and brothers Amado and Reynaldo Padrique, all of Barangay Magsaysay in Castillejos town.

Police said the group ran toward an open field and later complained that Diaz's men took their car keys and wallets.

Diaz was charged with slight physical injuries, malicious mischief, theft, grave threats and violation of Commission on Elections Resolution 3328 at the provincial prosecutor's office here.

Diaz, however, disputed the victims' claims, saying these were "baseless and lies."

He told the INQUIRER that he and his bodyguards quietly approached the group to advise them not to remove his campaign posters.

"They were caught red-handed so they ran away," Diaz said in a telephone interview.

He said he is planning to file disqualification charges against Magsaysay before the Comelec.

Diaz accused Magsaysay of maintaining an armed group composed of civilians and policemen said to be named "Task Force Andar." He claimed that the group is being used to intimidate his followers and destroy his campaign materials.

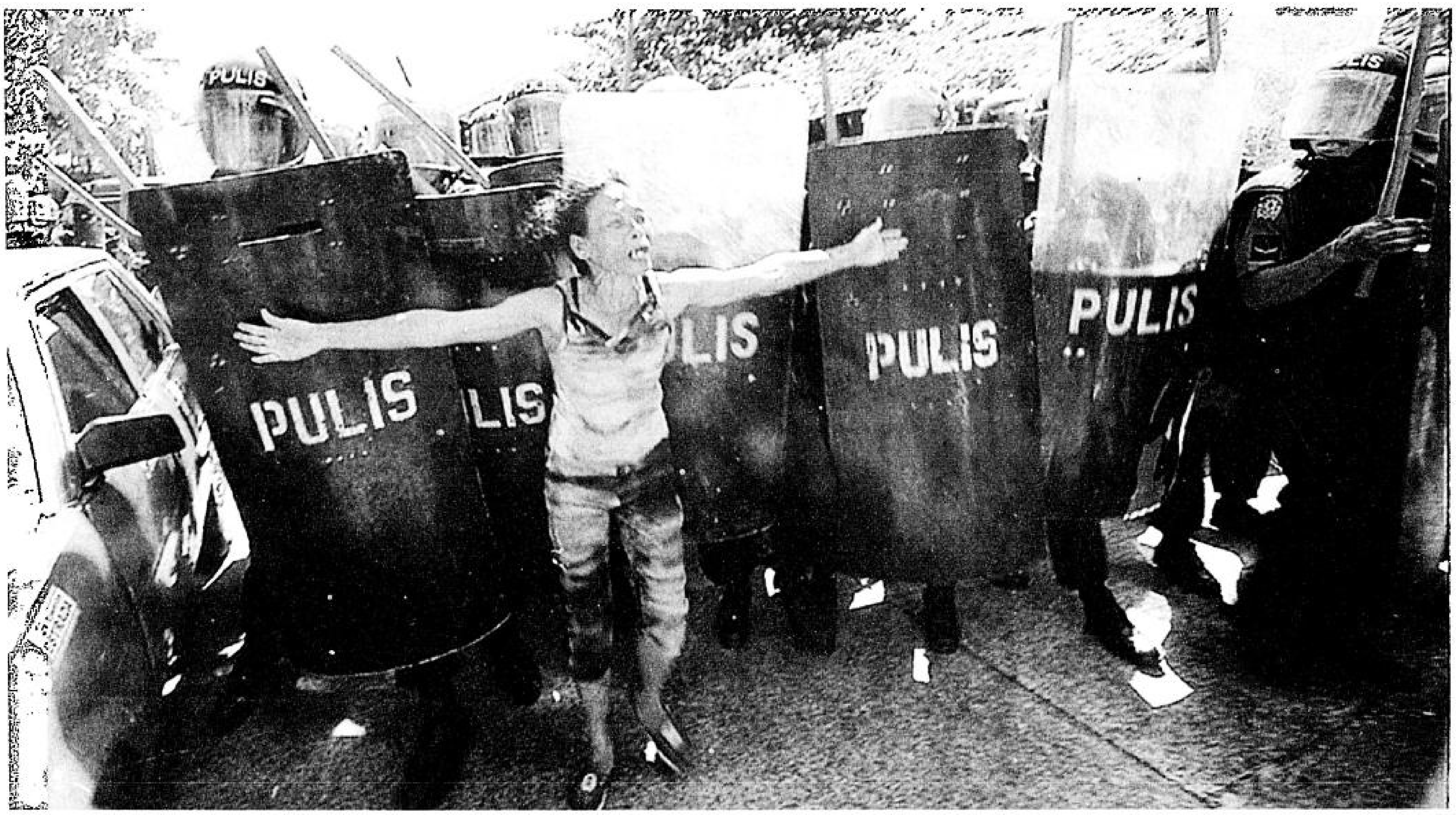
Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk

EDWIN BACASMAS

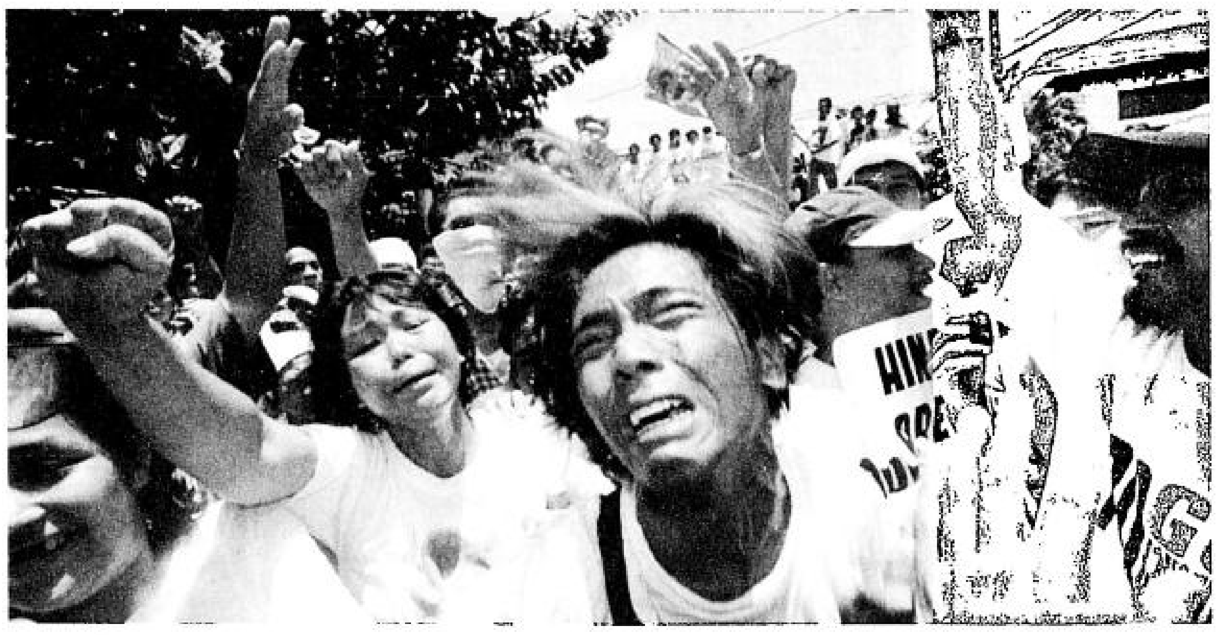
TOP cop, PNP chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, on his way to Polk Street to enforce the arrest warrant on the Estradas, father and son.

LOYALTY to the deposed President dies hard for his supporters who block police along Club Filipino Avenue for as long as they could. ERIK ARAZAS

Estrada supporters vow Edsa 3



ONE-WOMAN blocking force (above) to prevent the arrest of her idol. (Below) Desperately seeking a way out for their president to beat the law. ERIK ARAZAS



(From page A1)

Three! Edsa Three!" vowed not to leave until Estrada is released.

"*Kahit isang buwan, kahit isang taon*!" (Even if it takes a month, even a year!), the protesters said when asked on how long they planned to stay there.

At 6 p.m., however, when they started to create noise and harass vehicles on Edsa, they were dispersed by anti-riot squads of the Philippine National Police. The group proceeded to the Edsa Shrine on Ortigas Avenue in Mandaluyong City to join hundreds more who came there from Estrada's North Greenhills residence.

Supt. Jose Gentiles, Mandaluyong police chief, estimated the Ortigas crowd at 5,000 as of 8 p.m.

As of press time, the protesters were holding a program and were lighting candles outside the Shrine. They also painted "Erap" in big bold red letters on the wall below the statue of the Virgin Mary.

Police warned Estrada supporters against carrying out violent street protests.

"The (police) can only tolerate peaceful protest action, anything beyond this would (be met with) the appropriate police response," said Chief Supt. Thompson Lantion.

Teams of police have been "mobilized to monitor and thwart any attempts by some groups to take advantage of the situation and sow disinformation, chaos and violence," Lantion said.

Bonfire of PPC posters

The protesters outside Camp Crame tore down posters of People Power Coalition senatorial candidates and made a bonfire out of it.

"*Wala kaming bayad! Ginagawa namin ito para kay Erap!*" (We are not paid protesters! We're doing this for Erap!), they said.

Many claimed that they came from Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan and they said more would be joining them in due time.

But a police intelligence agent tasked to monitor the demonstrators told the INQUIRER that most of the protesters came from Tondo.

"Point out to me 20 persons and I can even tell you where in Tondo they live," the agent said.

Director Edgar Aglipay, PNP Chief for Operations, said that the Estrada supporters could not hold their protest in front of Camp Crame because they did not have a rally permit.

"We have gone to the limits of maximum tolerance," said Aglipay. "People inside the camp could not go home because of them, so we had to disperse the Erap supporters," he said in Filipino.

There are more than 1,000 anti-riot policemen inside Camp Crame ready for combat if the demonstrators force their way in.

Injured

Earlier in the afternoon, at least two Estrada supporters were injured during police dispersal operations in Greenhills, San Juan. At least one policeman was also injured by stones thrown by protesters.

Rodolfo Llague, 52, of Project 8, Quezon City, and Mateo Maria, 28, of Adnao North, Cabanatuan City had minor cuts in the head after anti-riot policemen allegedly beat them with truncheons while dispersing demonstrators outside the Madison Avenue gate of North Greenhills subdivision.

They were brought to the Cardinal Santos Hospital, but were released immediately after treatment.

A hospital employee, who refused to give his name, told the INQUIRER that San Juan mayoral candidate and Estrada's son, JV Ejercito, sent two women to pay the two victims' hospital bills. The INQUIRER chanced upon the women before they left on board a white car but they refused to give any comments.

Ejercito, in a radio interview, claimed that at least two women died after members of the police team shot at them. Police, however, denied this. It could also not be determined which hospital the supposed fatalities were brought. Staff members at the Cardinal Santos said only the two injured demonstrators were brought to the hospital.

A number of protesters were also arrested for throwing stones at the police.

The exclusive subdivision of North Greenhills became a battleground as some 1,500 pro-Estrada supporters clashed with riot police in a last ditch effort to stop the police from serving the arrest warrant on Estrada in his house on Polk Street.

The protesters forced their way inside the subdivision at around 11:15 a.m. by destroying the lock of the Buchanan gate near the Greenhills Shopping Center and cutting the rope that held them back.

Over in 5 minutes

The protesters then positioned themselves by the gate and on Buchanan, Hayes and Polk streets, a few meters from baton-wielding policemen. Some brought with them rocks, metal bars, and pieces of wood for the eventual confrontation with the police.

As tension rose, the protesters closed the Buchanan gate while their leaders began shouting "Erap *pa rin.*" But some of the protesters were already climbing over the gate to get out.

The police began dispersal operations at 2:30 p.m. The protesters threw rocks and mineral water bottles and a woman tried to hold off the police by spraying water on them using a garden hose. The dispersal was all over in just five minutes.

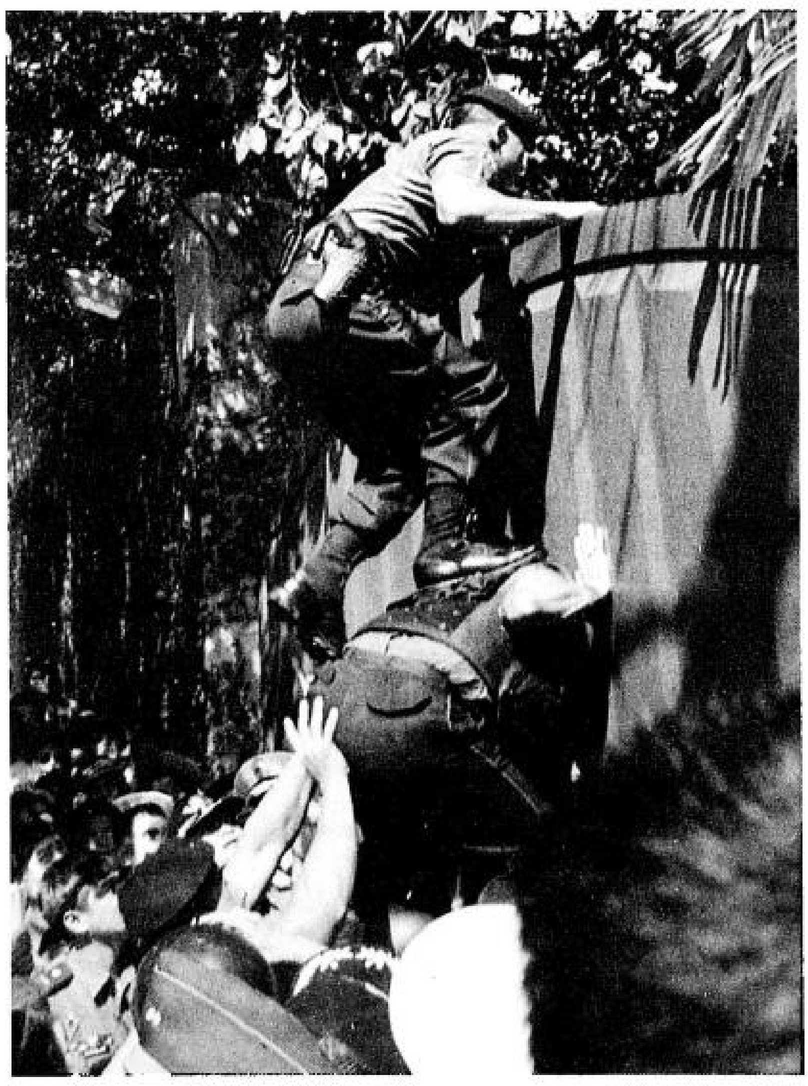
Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the success of a People Power III by Estrada supporters all depends "how much political clout Bro. Mike Velarde still has."

"Brother Mike is their biggest pillar of support . . . That will depend on Bro. Mike's ability to generate support for Erap," Pimentel said.

He noted that Velarde was able to mobilize his members for important events during the previous administration. He said that El Shaddai "could be a possible source of warm bodies" for pro-Estrada rallies. ***With reports from Christine Avendaño, Mark David and AFP***

HINDI PUEDENG
ARESTUHIN ANG
AMING
PANGULO
K.D.M.

HIS intentions are thwarted by a determined police force. EDWIN BACASMAS



SPECIAL Action Force swings into action and climbs the high gate of the Estrada residential compound. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Erap: I respect the Constitution

"I FOLLOWED the rule of law to the letter, and I ask our people now to respect our Constitution and the rule of law," deposed President Joseph Estrada said in a statement released to the media about an hour before he was taken into custody.

Estrada said he respected the law and the people's freedoms when he was President. He said he did not even jail a single journalist or any member of the opposition.

"I respected our people's rights despite the lies they had been accusing me and my family. I respected the rights of those who were in Edsa (last January) even if they insulted me and made all those accusations against me," he said in Filipino.

He did not order the police to disperse the protesters even if the rally participants had no permit, he said.

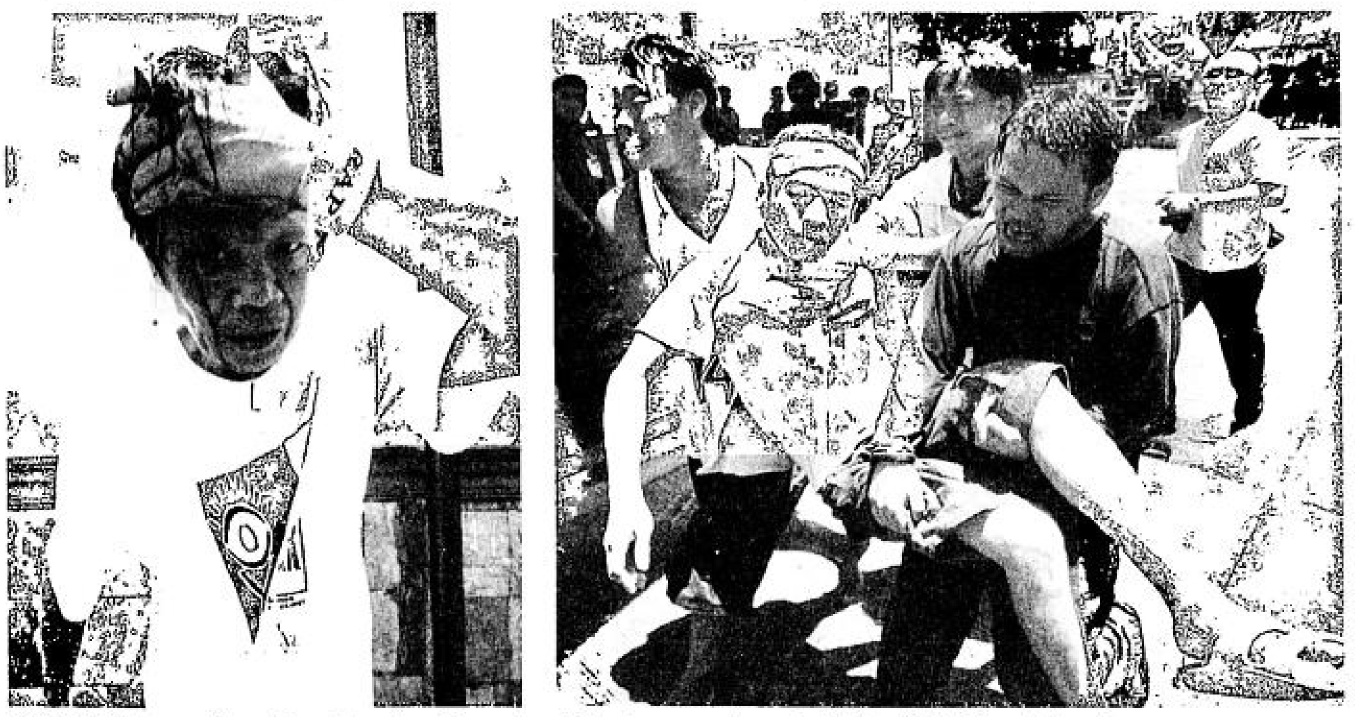
"But I myself have rights as your President. I have the right to be given the chance to defend myself," he said in his taped statement.

"If an elected president is not given justice, what more the ordinary citizen?" Estrada said.

"I did not violate the law and our Constitution," he stressed, and pointed out that it was the Macapagal administration that came into power by violating the Constitution.

"I will face the accusations against me. I believe that in the end, truth will prevail, that our Constitution will prevail," he said. ***Stella O. Gonzales***

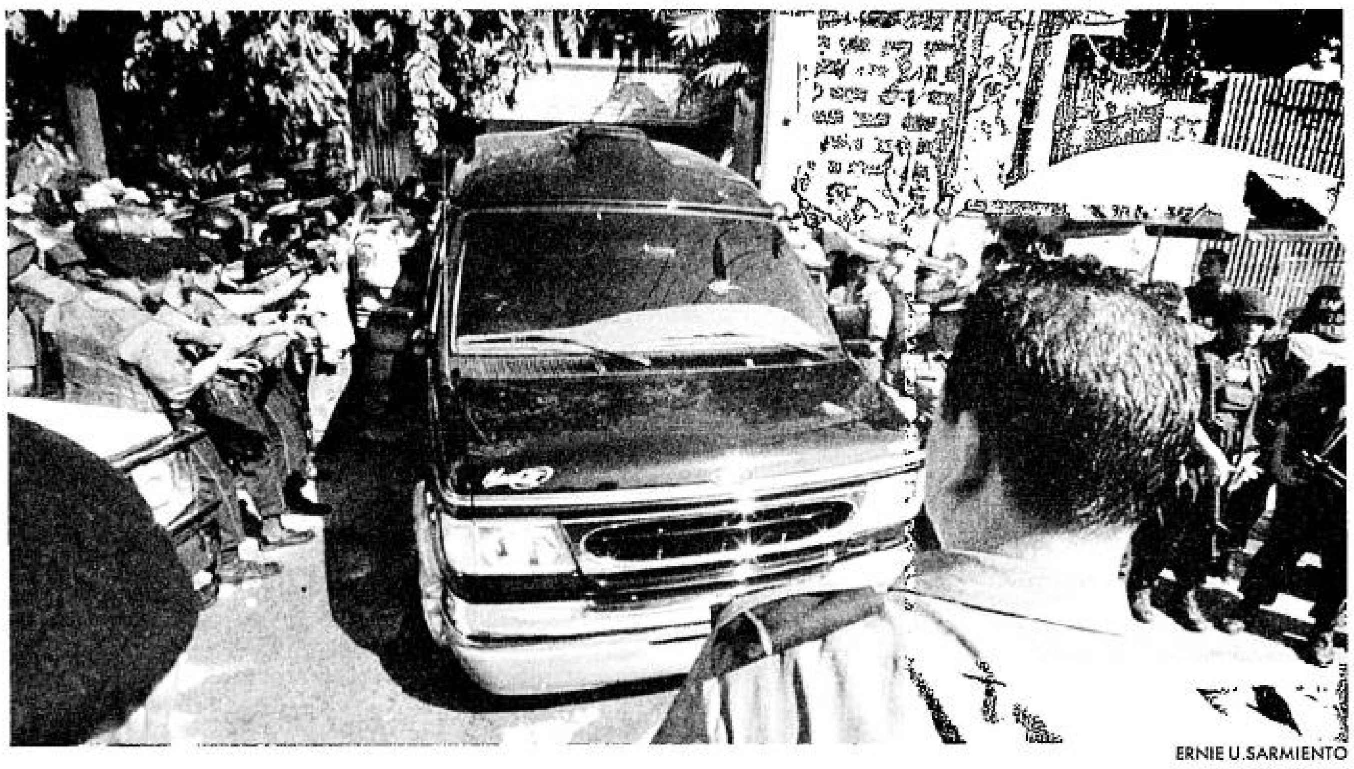
BATTLE of Polk Street is all over in five minutes; the police win and march on toward the Estrada residence.
EDWIN BACASMAS



DISPERSAL operation of the riot police injures two Estrada supporters outside the North Greenhills gate.
ERIK ARAZAS

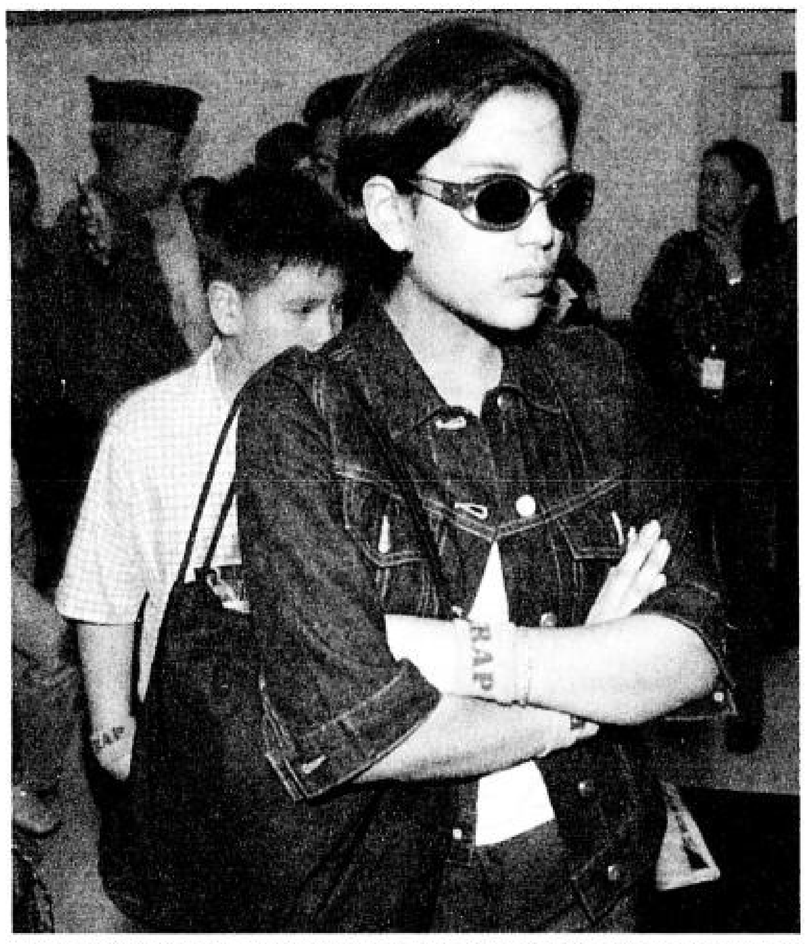
EDWIN BACASMAS

THE BLOCKADE of warm bodies makes way for former Supreme Court Chief Justice Andres Narvasa.



ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

THE ESTRADAS, father and son, are transported in their own vehicle, a dark black Ford van, to Camp Crame.



LAARNI ENRIQUEZ'S children, Jerica and Jacob go to Crame to stand by their father.
DENNIS SABANGAN

VINTAGE Estrada with cigarette in hand confers with his lawyers at the conference room of the PAOCTF Building.
EDWIN BACASMAS

Estrada arrest turning point in RP politics

(From page A1)

and the poor.

The arrest of Estrada was a turning point in Philippine politics in that for the first time in the history of the Republic, we have sent a president to jail to stand trial on charges of economic plunder.

Political will

It is a defining moment for the presidency of Ms Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Her administration is the first to prosecute a former president on criminal offenses, demonstrating a political will to make the point that the highest official of the land is not above the law. It put to rest doubts that her government would push for Estrada's arrest before the May 14 elections, in fear of an electoral backlash on the administration's candidates.

In defying the warnings of a backlash favoring the opposition Puwersa ng Masa senatorial ticket, President Macapagal put her administration on the line over a principle of justice that had eluded implementation in the Philippine political system—the principle that, under the rule of law, the powerful and the rich could be sent to jail to stand trial.

The prosecution of Estrada is also a two-edged blade. It stands as a warning to President Macapagal that the weapon can be turned on her, or future leaders, if they abuse power or fall prey to corruption.

The issuance of the arrest warrant by the Sandiganbayan and the impersonal enforcement of that order by the Philippine National Police, which only three months ago owed allegiance to Estrada, were a powerful manifestation of the new-found capacity of the Philippine state to rise above personalistic politics and to make its judicial and political institutions work.

In short, that we were able to put a president in jail—even while awaiting trial—on a capital offense is more than a symbol of the empowerment of the Philippine state. It shows a capacity to empower the state.

Humiliation

The Sandiganbayan's arrest order delivered a humiliating blow to Estrada by naming him in the charge sheet Joseph Ejercito Estrada a.k.a Asiong Salonga (the Tondo gangster whose life he depicted in the film of the same title) and Jose Velarde, the name he signed on banking transactions on laundered accounts.

In the history of the judicial system since we became a modern republic after World War II, our governments had sent high but less powerful officials to jail—the imprisonment of President Quirino's Defense and Justice Secretary Oscar Castelo (for the murder of Manuel Monroy) and the imprisonment of Gov. Rafael Lacson of Negros Occidental in the Moises Padilla murder case. These convictions took place in the 1950s.

Irony

Since then, no powerful official had been jailed until yesterday's arrest of Estrada. The arrest has thus revived hopes that the judicial system, left alone without interference from the executive, can administer justice equally to both the mighty and the poor. The irony in this breakthrough—which I find pathetic—is that in sacrificing their life and limb to prevent the arrest of Estrada, the poor recruited by the Estrada camp, were, in effect, protesting against the institution of an impersonal judicial system.

When they tried to block Estrada's arrest, they were, unwittingly, demonstrating that Estrada should be above the law and for a status quo in the judicial playing field in which the poor have been terribly disadvantaged and now manipulated to work against their own interests.

Arduous process

It must be made clear that the arrest is only the beginning of the arduous process of empowering the state. There are uncertainties over how speedy the trial would be. But Estrada and his lawyers cannot make the argument that the deposed president has been denied due process.

The Supreme Court gave Estrada all the opportunity to challenge the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration and to ask for a reconsideration of its 13-0 decision rebuffing Estrada's challenge.

The Sandiganbayan gave Estrada a reasonable scope to even delay the arrest before it issued the order. One of Estrada's lawyers, Rene Saguisag, cannot compare today's courts with the Marcos martial law courts, unless he has developed amnesia. During martial law, the courts were under the thumb of Marcos who ruled under an authoritarian Constitution and by decree.

It would be insulting the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan to insinuate that they were acting like a kangaroo court out to hang Estrada.

Crossing threshold

In the arrest of Estrada, we have crossed the threshold of what had been impossible in the past. We have regenerated the power of the Philippine state in the effort to strengthen impersonal institutions such as the courts and the police.

At the same time, we have established the foundations of reconciliation with justice—a powerful clamor that grew out of People Power II and that President Macapagal could not ignore without losing the support of a large constituency of the popular coalition that ousted Estrada. The threat of a backlash was not even credible. The pro-Estrada protests came from die-hard loyalists. They were the converted. So, the threat was more imagined—and exaggerated—than real.

'To put history to rights'

In the arrest of Estrada, we have joined the ranks of South Korea which, in their transition to democracy, did what they described as "to put history to rights" by jailing two former presidents after convicting them of corruption and mutiny and treason.

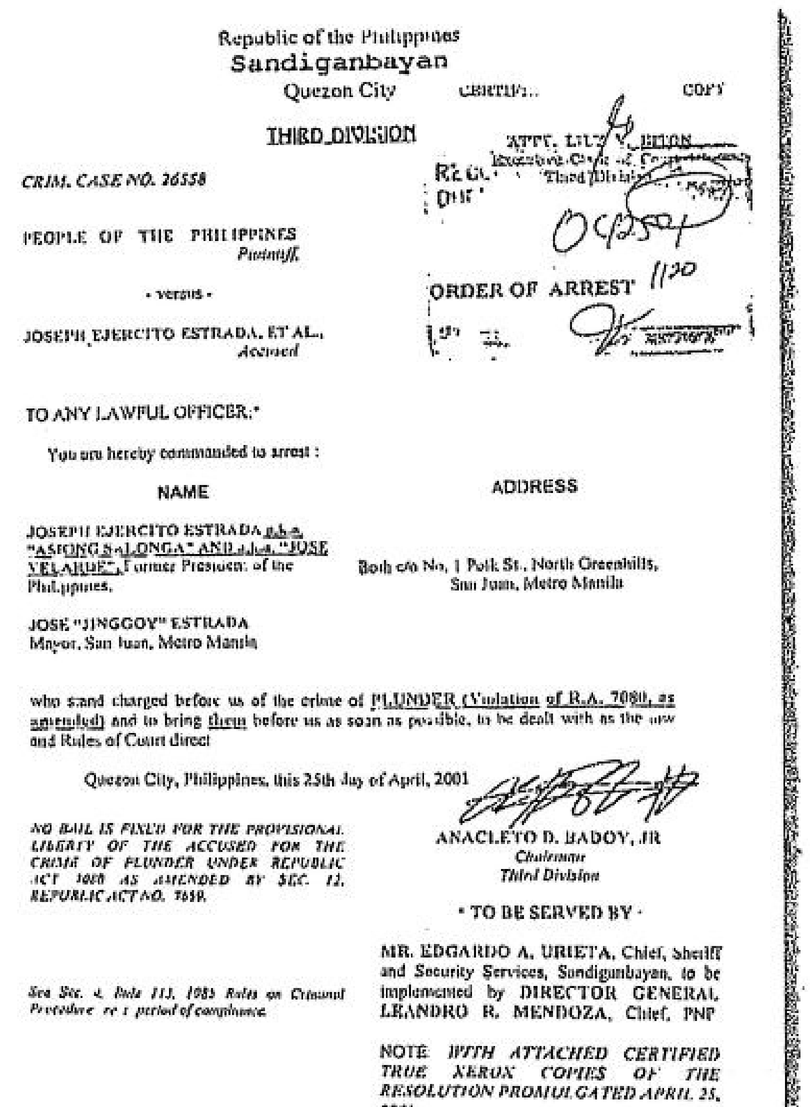
These were former presidents, Generals Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, who ruled Korea from 1980 to 1992 and were later accused of pocketing millions of dollars from businessmen while in office. They were further charged with mutiny and treason for the 1970 coup and crackdown in the 1971 "Kwangju Massacre."

A Seoul district court in 1996 sentenced Chun to death and Roh to 22 1/2 years in prison. The Supreme Court later reduced Chun's sentence to life imprisonment and Roh's to 17 years. They were sentenced by the democratic government of President Kim Young-sam.

President Kim Dae-jung, who succeeded Kim Young-sam, gave them amnesty in 1997.

Another new democracy, Indonesia, demonstrated the capacity to jail a leader for corruption. After he was ousted in 1998, Suharto was charged with corruption and placed under house arrest to stand trial. The arrest came after students staged massive demonstrations demanding his arrest.

Last April, police stormed the house of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and arrested him on charges of abuse of power and corruption stemming from his ruinous rule that plunged Yugoslavia into the Balkan wars. He was arrested after a 26-hour standoff in which his armed bodyguards held off police ordered to seize him. The stalemate was peaceful and was broken by negotiations. He was deposed by people power last October after he cheated in the presidential elections.



Republic of the Philippines
Sandiganbayan
Quezon City

CERTIFI[illegible] COPY

THIRD DIVISION

ATTY. LIL[illegible] [illegible]
Executive Clerk of Court
Third Division

CRIM. CASE NO. 26558

REC[illegible]
DIF[illegible]

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES
Plaintiff,

0(?)2504

- versus -

ORDER OF ARREST 1120

JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, ET AL.,
Accused

TO ANY LAWFUL OFFICER:*

You are hereby commanded to arrest :

NAME	ADDRESS
JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA a.k.a. "ASIONG SALONGA" AND a.k.a. "JOSE VELARDE", Former President of the Philippines.	Both c/o No. 1 Polk St., North Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
JOSE "JINGGOY" ESTRADA Mayor, San Juan, Metro Manila	

who stand charged before us of the crime of PLUNDER (Violation of R.A. 7080, as amended) and to bring them before us as soon as possible, to be dealt with as the law and Rules of Court direct

Quezon City, Philippines, this 25th day of April, 2001

NO BAIL IS FIXED FOR THE PROVISIONAL LIBERTY OF THE ACCUSED FOR THE CRIME OF PLUNDER UNDER REPUBLIC ACT 7080 AS AMENDED BY SEC. 12, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7659.

ANACLETO D. BADOY, JR
Chairman
Third Division

* TO BE SERVED BY *

MR. EDGARDO A. URIETA, Chief, Sheriff and Security Services, Sandiganbayan, to be implemented by DIRECTOR GENERAL LEANDRO R. MENDOZA, Chief, PNP

See Sec. 4, Rule 113, 1985 Rules on Criminal Procedure re: period of compliance.

NOTE: *WITH ATTACHED CERTIFIED TRUE XEROX COPIES OF THE RESOLUTION PROMULGATED APRIL 25, 2001.*

Shark goes for 7th win

GAMES TODAY (Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Osaka Iridology vs Hapee Toothpaste
5:30 p.m.—Shark Energy Drink vs GIV Beauty Soap

STANDINGS	W	L
Shark	6	0
Ana	5	1
Welcoat	3	3
PharmaQuick	3	3
GIV	2	2
Montaña	2	3
Ateneo	1	3
Hapee	1	4
Osaka	0	4

LEADER Shark Energy Drink aches for revenge when it clashes with sister-team GIV Beauty Soap today in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

"Going up against a sister-team is more difficult compared with the other teams. What happened in the Challenge Cup remains fresh in our minds. It's payback time," said Shark coach Leo Austria.

Shark also started with a six-game winning streak last conference. GIV (formerly Blu Detergent) snapped that amazing run. *Dennis U. Eroa*

ANTONIO WINS
Indon, Vietnamese pace Zonal chess

By Roy Luarca

FOREIGN GMs Utut Adianto and Dao Thien Hai lived up to their lofty billing in Round 2 of the Asian Zone 3.2a Chess Championship yesterday at the Grand Boulevard Hotel-Manila.

The top-seeded Adianto of Indonesia and defending champion Dao Thien Hai of Vietnam tallied their second point to share the lead with upstart Nguyen Thanh Son and tow a four-man bunch headed by Filipino GM Joey Antonio.

Adianto, Board 1 gold medalist of the Istanbul Olympiad, whipped compatriot GM Edhi Handoko in 40 moves of a Slav, while the Hungary-trained and No. 2 seed Dao kept pace by downing Fide master Fernie Donguines in 35 moves of a Sicilian Najdorf.

It was Nguyen, ranked 23rd, who caused a ripple, however, when he stunned 8th seeded Mongolian GM Bazar Hatanbaatar in 55 moves of a Sicilian Taimanov.

Antonio exploited a slight advantage to subdue Iligan City-based National Master Allan Sayson in 53 moves of a Sicilian Defense and raise his total to 1.5 points in the tournament sponsored by Pagcor, College Assurance Plan and Social Security System.

ANTONIO

Bunched with Antonio, the No. 5 seed and Millennium Grand Prix champion, were Fide master Idelfonso Datu, NM Emmanuel Senador and Vietnamese GM Nguyen Anh Dung.

Datu and Nguyen drew their game, while Senador turned back NM Darwin Laylo in 50 moves of an English Opening.

"It was a complicated position and I need to be precise in my calculation," said Antonio. "When I saw the break, I took control of the c-file. Before long there was a mating threat."

GMs Eugene Torre and Bong Villamayor, who was edged by Dao via the tiebreak last year, posted their second draws against fellow Filipinos to lie at 1 point with nine others.

Torre split the point with 17-year-old IM Mark Paragua in 42 moves of a King's Indian Attack, while Villamayor halved his with NM Jayson Gonzales in 35 moves of another English.

Only Yves Ranola, the 1992 National Junior champion, became the only Filipino victor when he employed the seldom-used Side-Step variation to whip Chor Yuen Chong in 40 moves and recover from his first round-defeat to Adianto.

Other 1-pointers were Handoko, Donguines, Hatanbaatar, Gonzales, Paragua, Indon IM Danny Juswanto, Mongolian GM Dashzeveg Sharavdorj and Cecep Kosasaih.

Vietnamese WGM Hoang Thanh Trang celebrated her 21st birthday yesterday with a 36-move victory over Mongolian Bayanmonh Anchimeg that gave her 2 points and the lead in the distaff side.

Palawan hosting motocross

PALAWAN, the country's "Last Frontier," will be the host of the third leg of the National Motocross Super Series 2001: A Race of Yamaha on Saturday, April 28.

More than 100 riders from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have already confirmed their participation in this prestigious series being organized by Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. in cooperation with MAD (Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga) and Kids Foundation.

This will be the first of five out-of-town races in this year's national motocross series sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa). Hartebeest marketing manager Marilen Nunez said a record crowd is expected to watch the event.

UP 5 upsets Boysen

MICHAEL Bravo sank six-of-six from the free throw line as University of the Philippines pulled off a 65-60 upset over defending champion Boysen-MLQU yesterday to gain a share of the lead in the 1st Crystal Spring PYBL Title Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

It was the second straight victory for the Fighting Maroons, who joined idle University of Assumption on top.

The loss spoiled the Paint Experts' bid for a repeat of their feat sweeping all games last season.

In the other game, National University beat Spring Cooking Oil, 92-67.

Jobo derby

MANDALUYONG Coliseum's "Prince Jerome Jobo 6-Cock Derby," hosted by veteran derbyist Lito Orillaza, enters its championship round beginning at 7 tonight, with more than 40 exciting fights on tap. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Ten cockers posted two victories each in Tuesday's eliminations. They are lawyer Rudy Salud (Winning Time DVH), Ting Ariosa (TSA Ray), Dicky Lim (Winslet), Bobby Wong (First of May), Muroy Dolorico (Livewire), Lito Alcantara (LA 393, Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master II), Eddie Aparri (Marvelous Jay) and E. Mercado (King Jerome I and II).

NGAP tourney

DJ PADILLA banners the campaign of the big City bets while Allan John Miñoza will be at the head of the provincial entries in the National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP) age-group finals today at the Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Trece Martires, Cavite. Padilla is NCR's top bet in Class B.

JOSHUA Tanho looks like he has suddenly been fitted with wings as he returns the ball in this bit of action in the Head-Penn Age-Group Tennis Championships yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.
JESS YUSON

Iverson stars as 76ers defeat Pacers, 116-98

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania— Allen Iverson scored 19 of his playoff career-high 45 points in the third quarter as the Philadelphia 76ers withstood Reggie Miller's hot start and rolled to a 116-98 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Tuesday.

IVERSON

The top-seeded 76ers, who were stunned by Miller's game-winning 3-pointer in Game One, tied their best-of-five National Basketball Association first-round playoff series at one game apiece. Game Three is Saturday at Indiana.

Limited by double-teams to 16 points on 7-of-19 shooting in the opener, Iverson could not be contained in this one. He made 15-of-27 shots and handed out nine assists as he wreaked havoc with the defensive schemes of the Pacers.

The NBA's scoring leader at 31.1 points per game, Iverson was outdone in the first half by Miller, who scored 33 points with a blistering shooting display. He appeared on his way to another of his clutch postseason performances but inexplicably lost his touch in the third quarter, when he missed all three of his shots.

That was when Iverson and the 76ers took control. The 6-foot guard was too quick for defenders ranging from 5-foot-10-inch Travis Best to 6-foot-9-inch Al Harrington. He scored Philadelphia's last 10 points of the period on a variety of jumpers, opening a 90-78 lead.

Iverson eclipsed his previous playoff high of 40 points, set last year in Game One of the first round at Charlotte. He played every minute until sitting down for good with 2:06 to go, leaving to chants of "MVP" from the sellout First Union Center crowd.

Miller matched his playoff career high of 41 set last year in Game Five of the first round against Milwuakee. He made 14-of-22 shots but just 1-of-7 after halftime, when he was not a factor.

Jazz 109, Mavericks 98

In Salt lake City, Karl Malone scored 34 points and Bryon Russell had 24 as Utah moved out to a 2-0 lead in the best-of-five, first-round playoff series.

The Jazz, who can end the series Saturday with a win in Dallas, outhustled, outmuscled and outplayed the Mavericks for three quarters, then held on in the fourth. *AP, AFP*

Kings-Suns on '9'

VIVA Vintage Sports will telecast Game 2 of the Sacramento Kings-Phoenix Suns first-round NBA Playoffs series today at 12 noon on RPN-9, with a replay at 5:30 p.m. on IBC-13.

MJCI to host PCSO race

ALL roads lead to the San Lazaro Hippodrome on Sunday as the stage is set for the much-awaited track showdown of champion gallopers Wind Blown and Silver Story in the 1.6-million PCSO First Gentleman Silver Cup Championship.

The classic face-off of the two champions will serve as the main event of Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI) 5-day race starting today.

"MJCI is truly proud to host this clash between the top two thoroughbred racers in the land, which is a must-see event for all horse-racing aficionados in the country," said MJCI chair and president Alfonso R. Reyno Jr.

A total of nine starters are set to contest the coveted PCSO First Gentleman Silver Cup, which is being held in honor of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo in his representative role as one of the chief patrons of the sport-industry.

"The PCSO invited Mr. Arroyo to award the championship cup to the owner of the winning horse in recognition of his being an avid follower of horse racing," said MJCI EVP and CEO Roberto R. Reverente.

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Race 3—1. Deputy Parade 2. Little Voices 3. Doctor's Advice 4. Impeccable

Race 4—1. All Powerful 2. Wendy's Pride 3. Queen Jamie 4. Silver Gray/Triple Joy

Race 5—1. Ocean Magic 2. Arresbee 3. Strong Element 4. Shot Gun

Race 6—1. Dial Tone 2. Three of Heart 3. Change for Keeps 4. Boss Lino

Race 7—1. Victoria Scarlet 2. Breakaway Artist 3. Jinky 4. Memorabilia

Race 8—1. Ocean Dignity 2. Maid of Kalibo 3. Romantic Bay 4. Le Voyager

Thai challenger vows to knock out Pacquiao

MANNY Pacquiao lost his WBC flyweight crown to Medgoen 3K Battery of Thailand two years ago.

Another Thai vowed yesterday to dethrone Pacquiao from his perch as WBC international superbantamweight champion on Saturday in Kidapawan, North Cotabato.

In a pre-fight gathering hosted by North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol at the Lotus Garden Hotel, Wethya Sakmuangklang promised to duplicate Medgoen's feat.

"The proceeds of the fight will fund the grassroots development program of boxing in North Cotabato. The fight will also erase doubts on North Cotabato's peace and order situation, tainted by the insurgency in the area which ended last year," said Piñol.

"I'll make sure this will be an exciting fight. And nothing will be more exciting than knocking Pacquiao out," said Sakmuangklang through an interpreter. *June Navarro*

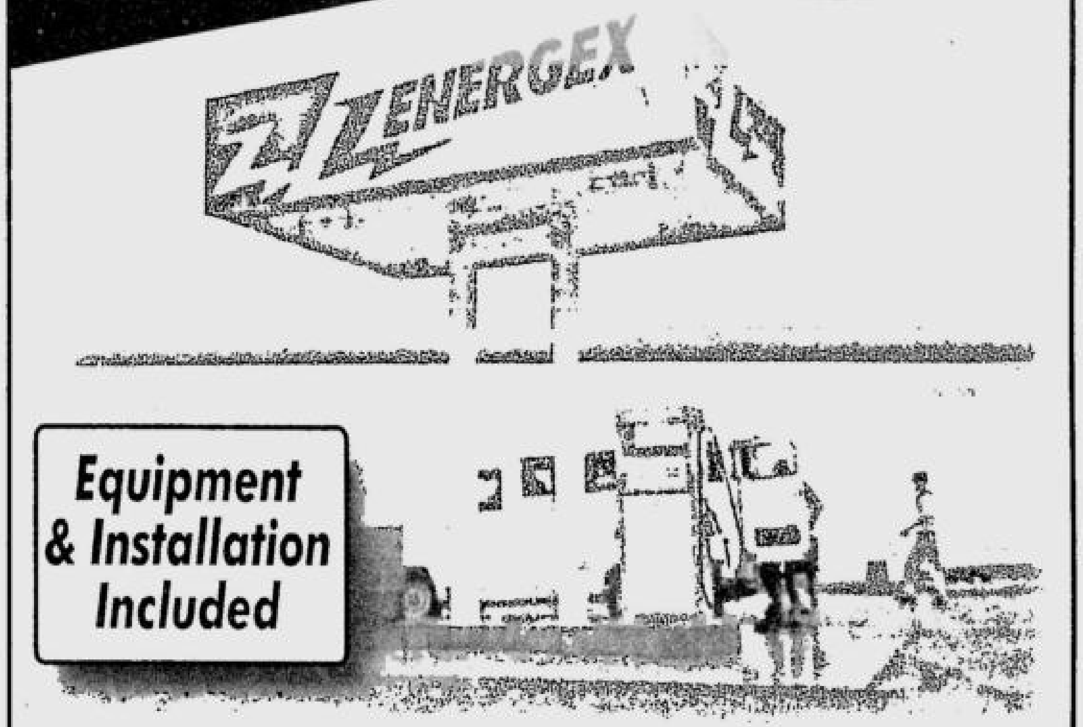
Lao, Dandan prevail

TOP seed Mauric Lao defeated Mark Christian Tan, 6-1, 6-2, and No. 4 Kyle Dandan beat Raymond Villarete, 6-2, 6-2, yesterday to reach the boys' 14-under quarterfinals in the Head-Penn Age Group Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Lao will meet the winner between James Murell and Jasper Alpuerto while Dandan will face Miguel Pantua, who scored a 6-4, 6-3 win over Jaime Ochoa.

In other matches, No. 2 Miguel Narvaez blanked Leslie Santaguel, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against Roderick Agna, who won by default over Zozimo Battad II and No. 3 Arithmetico Lim downed Carlo Navarro, 6-3, 6-1, to advance against Roncel Allan Tan, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Bryan Dayleg.

Earlier, unranked James Carl Canete ousted No. 8 Leyan Moncera, 6-2, 6-1, to join No. 2 Juan Felipe Mayor, No. 3 Russell Arcilla Jr., No. 4 Gerard Bergavera, No. 5 Daniel Luis Macalino and No. 7 Mark Balce in the boys' 12-under quarterfinals of this tournament supported by Chris Sports, Toalson, Agfa, Red Bull and official ball Penn.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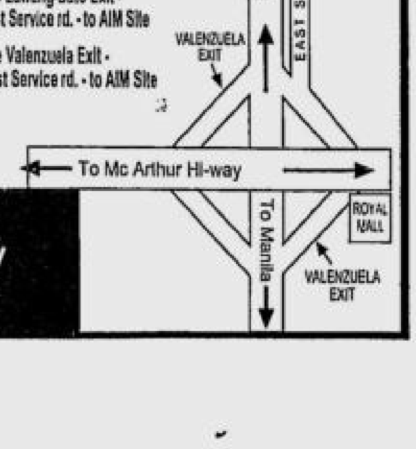


SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

Pop Cola, Ginebra triumph

POP Cola pulled off the first surprise in the PBA All-Filipino Cup semifinals last night, beating San Miguel Beer, 73-64, at Philsports.

Using a solid eight-man rotation, the Panthers clawed at the Beermen with unusual ferocity to win Game 1 of their best-of-five series.

"I always thought that if they beat us handily tonight, it's going to be the trend of the series," said Pop Cola coach Chot Reyes. "But we didn't only keep the game close, we went on to beat them."

Although their players can rival that of SMB's in terms of talent and star power, the Panthers walked the extra mile and beat the Beermen in one crucial aspect: Hard work.

Poch Juinio, Johnny Abarrientos, Rudy Hatfield, Estong Ballesteros and Nelson Asaytono showed that they deserve their fat paychecks by dutifully doing unglamorous chores like defense, offensive rebounds and follow-ups.

The Panthers' collective hustle also forced the normally poised Beermen to 23 turnovers, which Pop Cola made better use of.

While everything crumbled on SMB's side, Pop Cola was busy making second-chance points (14) scoring baskets off turnovers (25) and even had the energy left to beat SMB in fastbreak points (8-5).

Barangay Ginebra beat Shell Velocity, 90-78, in the second game to also post a 1-0 lead in their separate semifinals series.

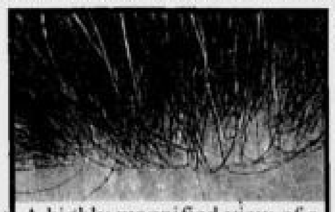
POP 73 – Juinio 18, Abarrientos 12, Ballesteros 12, Hatfield 12, Asaytono 7, Bolado 6, Antonio 4, Jarencio 2.

SMB 64 – Seigle 20, Ildefonso 17, Belasco 12, Racela 5, Mustre 4, Pena 3, Abuda 2, Victoria 1, Duat 0.

Quarters: 16-20, 32-36, 56-54, 73-64.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m. – Ginebra vs Shell
7:30 p.m. – SMB vs Pop Cola

■ Antonio wins A17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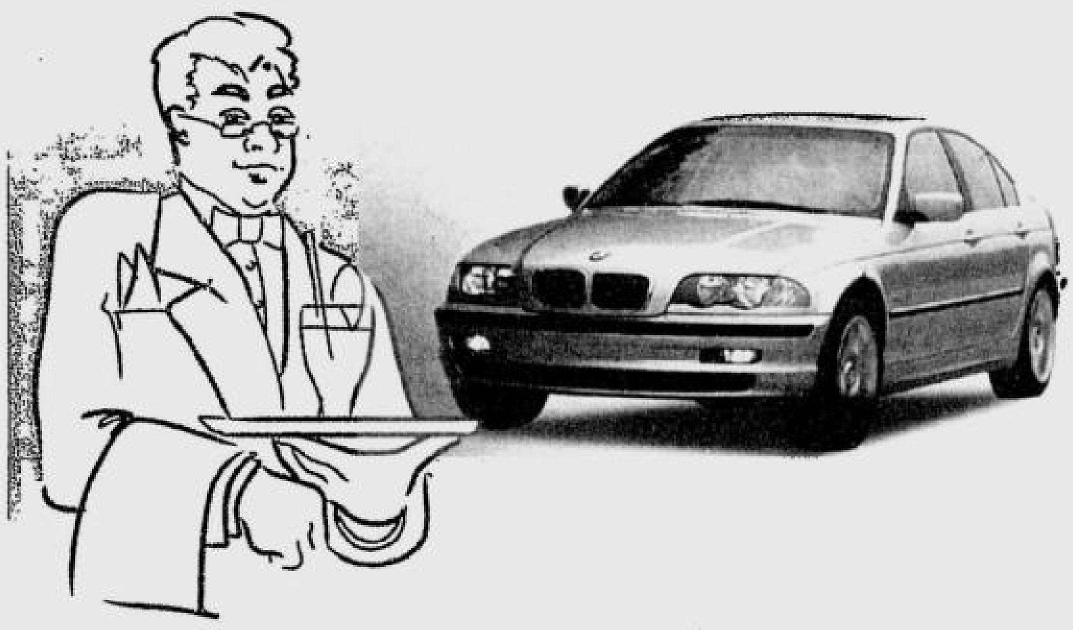
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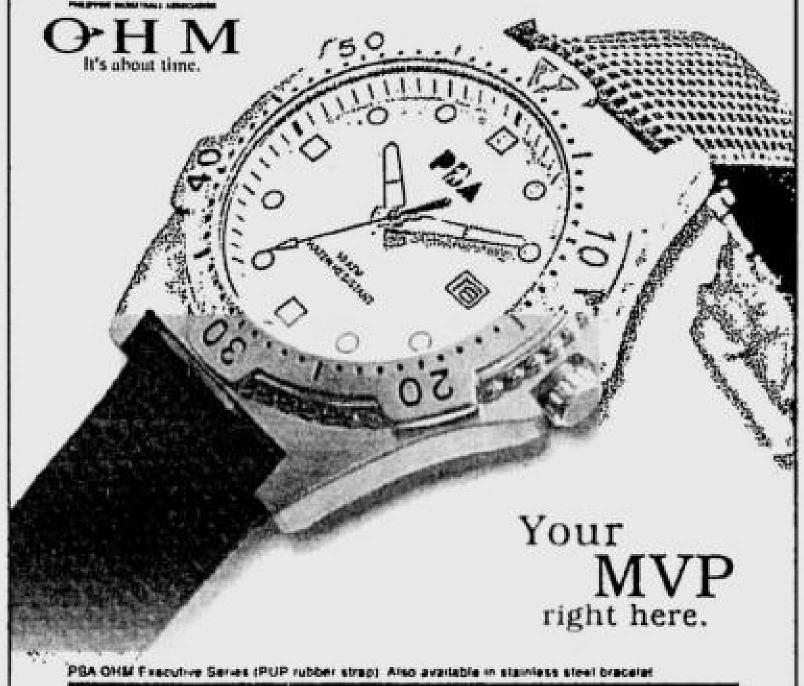

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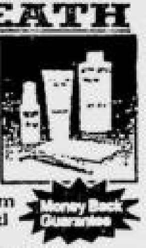
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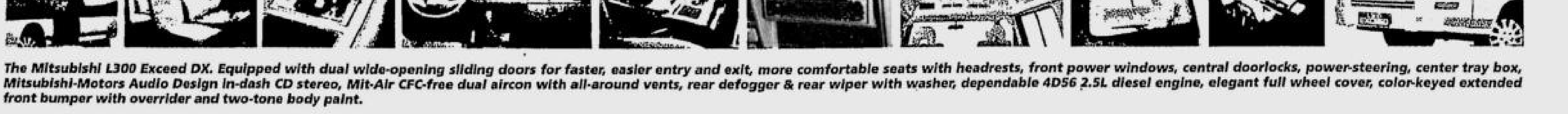
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ROTC killers fall

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday announced the arrest of two brothers for their alleged involvement in last month's abduction and killing of University of Santo Tomas sophomore Mark Wilson Chua.

Jeffrey and Genesis Binagatan were arrested about 11 p.m. on Tuesday in their house at the corner of Cavite and Elias streets near the Chinese General Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Manila, said lawyer Edmund Arugay, chief of the NBI's Special Action Unit.

Witnesses tagged the Binagatan brothers as the ones who dumped Chua's body into the Pasig River.

Their arrest bolstered speculations that Chua was killed because of his exposé of alleged corruption in the school's Reserved Officers Training Course.

Both Jeffrey and Genesis Binagatan are staff sergeants at the UST ROTC office under Major Demy Tejares. They are army reservists but are not organic members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Tejares was relieved of his post as UST ROTC commandant following Chua's allegations of corruption in his office.

NBI-SAU agents secured a warrant from a Manila judge, conducted a search of the Binagatan residence and seized at least three unlicensed handguns, Arugay said.

The brothers, now undergoing interrogation, will be charged today with kidnapping with murder before the Manila City Prosecutors Office.

ROTC/ A21

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Aboitiz plane crew, 6 others cheat death

By TJ Burgonio

THREE crew members and six passengers of a cargo plane escaped death after one of the plane's two engines caught fire upon landing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday morning.

Members of the airport's fire and rescue team rushed to the scene and sprayed foam on the burning left engine of the Aboitiz cargo plane, registered as RP-C3500, to keep the blaze from spreading.

The plane, piloted by Capt. Edgar Alcantara and first Officer Frederick Hagedorn, took off from Naga.

Firemen doused the fire after two minutes. Shortly after the blaze was put out, the crew and the passengers were instructed to debark and were brought to the terminal. None of them was hurt.

The YS-11 aircraft was towed to the Aboitiz hangar at the old Manila Domestic Airport about 20 minutes after it landed. No commercial or chartered flight was delayed by the incident.

As of presstime, a team of investigators dispatched by the Air Transportation Office was still looking into the cause of the fire.

"It could have been caused by a fuel leak," said ATO Assistant Secretary Adelberto Yap.

The plane's left engine burst into flames as it landed at runaway 06-24 of Naia about 10:55 a.m.

Alarmed by the fire, Alcantara immediately alerted the ATO tower for assistance.

Security guards barred some mediamen from going to the scene upon the instruction of Peter Mutuc, the newly appointed chief of the Airport Police Department.

A CRIPPLED Aboitiz cargo plane gets a dousing from alert airport firemen yesterday. The plane, coming in from Naga City, made an emergency landing after one of its engines caught fire.

ROGER MARGALLO

Worker nabbed for rape of high school girl

By Jerome Aning

A YOUNG woman yesterday accused a factory worker of raping her three times in her dormitory room in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Police arrested Pablo Golasa, 25, of Parcel Street in Sta. Mesa following the rape complaint filed by a 22-year-old junior high school student with the Western Police District's women's desk.

The girl told police that Golasa, who is married and has two children, sneaked into her room in the mornings of April 20, 21 and 22 and then raped her. She and Golasa live in the same dormitory in Sta. Mesa.

She said Golasa would climb through a hole in the ceiling from his room to her room, which was next to his. She said Golasa would poke a dagger at her neck, cover her mouth with his hand, and then order her to strip.

The girl said she feared for her life and yielded to Golasa's demands.

She claimed Golasa would tell her each time he would rape her that he was ready to marry her.

She also said that she had turned down Golasa despite his insistent wooing because he was a drug dependent and already married with children.

MMDA WARNING

No segregation, no collection

ABALOS

By Nelson F. Flores and Roselle Aguilar

HOUSEHOLD waste around Metro Manila must be segregated, otherwise they will not be collected beginning Tuesday.

Metro Manila Development Authority (MMD) chair Benjamin Abalos came out with this terse memo yesterday in a follow-up of an earlier announcement meant to put sense into garbage collection in the metropolis.

Abalos told the Inquirer his office has already made the proper representation with all local government units on the strict implementation of the waste segregation scheme.

He said all establishments and households in Metro Manila should segregate their waste into biodegradable and nonbiodegradable categories so the composting and recycling of waste can be facilitated.

"Otherwise their waste won't be collected and if they throw their garbage wantonly, especially in public places, they would be arrested and fined," Abalos said.

Abalos said public market administrators, non-government organizations involved in recycling and composting, garbage collection contractors, solid waste management officers of local government units, barangay officials, and local government executives have already pledged support for the scheme.

"With this kind of support, there is no reason why the public cannot comply with the segregation scheme which was mandated by Republic Act 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act)."

The collected waste would be processed at community-based recycling centers, at the Manggahan depot or at the Las Piñas Transfer Station.

The exalted has been humbled

On Target

Ramon Tulfo

WHAT most of us feared would happen if deposed President Erap was arrested on plunder charges did not happen.

A large part of the citizenry, including this writer, thought that there would be chaos if Mr. Estrada, who boasts of a big following among the poor, would be taken into custody.

But only a small group of the deposed president's supporters fought tooth and nail to block his arrest. And those supporters were apparently doing it for the money and food given them.

As always, we have overrated Erap.

* * *

Let's give it to the guy: people see him as a seven-foot-tall figure inspiring respect.

But the truth is, he's only full of hot air. He's an *ampaw*, a Chinese cookie which is hollow inside.

When you come to know Erap from up close, you'll have nothing but contempt for the guy.

Ask people who know him very well—Mark Jimenez, Rey Berroya, Charlie "Atong" Ang, Panfilo Lacson, Luis "Chavit" Singson. All of them did not have respect for him. Lacson, before he became national police chief, was even heard to say he would arrest Erap if he was not appointed to the top police post.

* * *

Why? Because Erap is not worthy of respect. He may loom larger than life, like most movie stars, but only for a while.

He's as human as most of us are, in fact, even more human.

When he was San Juan mayor, he would have town policemen line up when he was drunk. He would urinate on each one of them. Then he would pay them for the humiliation.

And when Mayor Erap was very drunk, a friend recalls, he would piss on the balcony of the *municipio*, to the consternation of passersby.

* * *

Millions of citizens who voted him into office did not know about that dark side of Erap. Or if they did, they still voted for him.

They can be forgiven for their cluelessness or bullheadedness. They didn't know any better. Most of them are illiterate or semi-literate.

But alas, educated people who knew about Erap's juvenile nature and still chose him President over his rivals can't be forgiven.

I submit I was one of such supposedly "intelligent" voters. I thought he was going to reform when he became president. I couldn't have been more wrong.

* * *

On a morning TV talk show program last Tuesday, I was asked what I would tell Erap should I come face to face with him while he's in jail.

I said I would tell him that had he listened to his critics and his official advisers instead of his cronies, he would not have suffered what he's going through at this moment.

But I said Erap should be given all the respect and dignity befitting a former President when he's detained.

Media colleague and senatorial candidate Winnie Monsod, who was a fellow guest in the same program, was more unforgiving. She said Erap should be considered like an ordinary detainee. Winnie said his being a former President was an aggravating circumstance because he took advantage of the exalted position.

After thinking it over, I now agree with Winnie Monsod. Officials who abuse their positions should be meted out the stiffest penalty under the law.

* * *

Millions of citizens probably rejoiced over the arrest of San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, who is a coaccused in the plunder charges.

Jinggoy is that unpopular. *Napakayabang kasi ng* Jinggoy *na ito.*

Somebody should have told Jinggoy that power is only temporary. You have it now, you lose it tomorrow.

* * *

Even when his father was no longer in power, Jinggoy still tried to throw his weight around at the Domestic Airport.

When his baggage and those of his mom, Loi, and Sen. Tito Sotto, were inspected by airport police, he cursed them. "*Mga* bullshit *kayo*," he told them.

He nearly came to blows with an officer of the police Aviation Security Group because of his arrogant behavior.

* * *

Jinggoy was just acting in character.

A few weeks before his father was deposed, Jinggoy went to the United States on an "official business" (my sources said he went to Las Vegas and lost millions of pesos) with his wife and friends.

Aboard the Philippine Airlines (PAL) flight to Los Angeles, a flight stewardess admonished him against smoking on board. Smoking aboard a plane bound for the US is a federal offense even if the plane is still out of American territory.

* * *

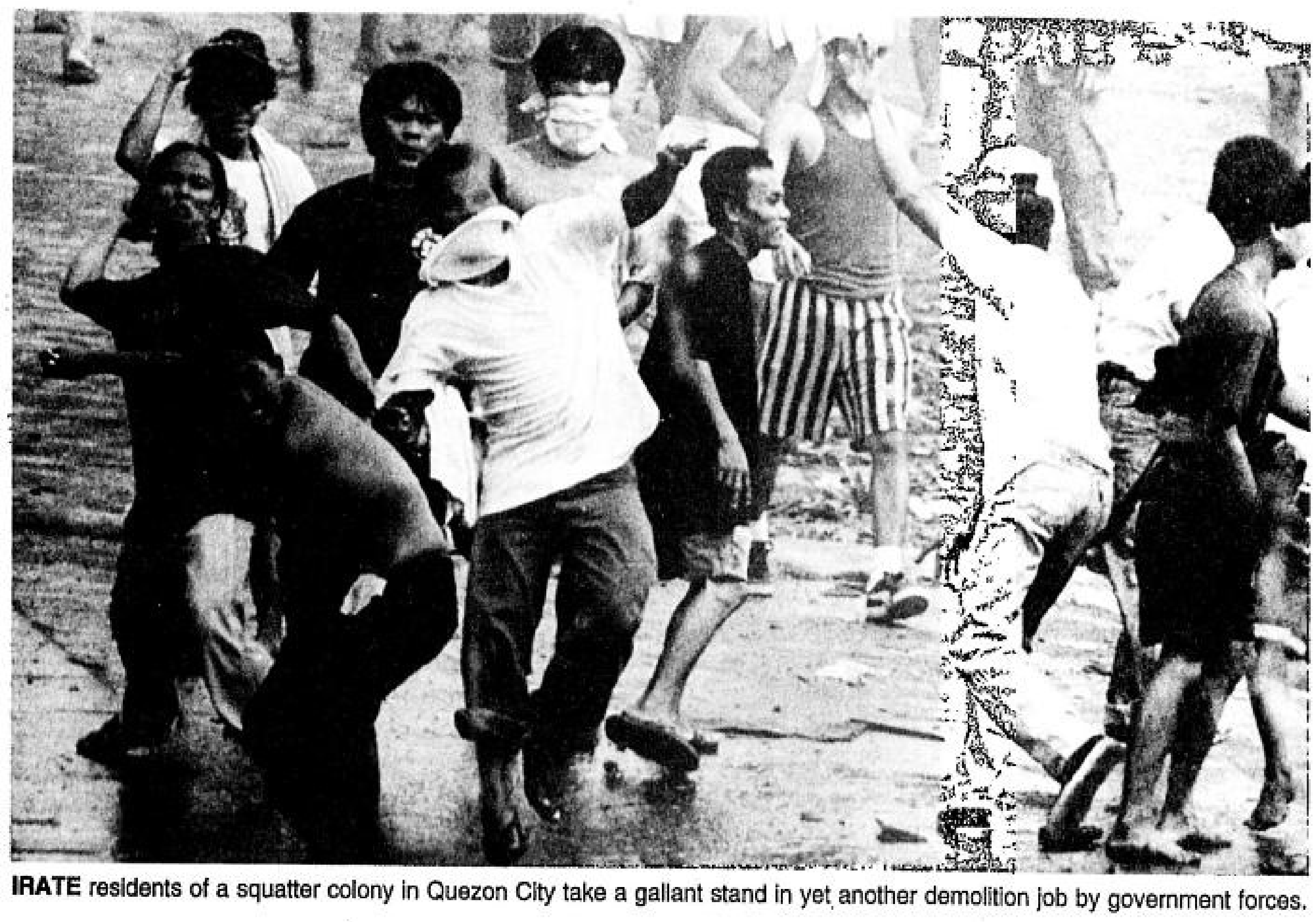
You know how this guy reacted?

Jinggoy felt insulted being told not to smoke on board. He said angrily that probably the aircraft pilot was "anti-Erap" because he didn't want him, the President's son, to smoke.

Jinggoy and his friends did not follow the admonition. They smoked inside the plane's comfort room.

Let's hope Jinggoy's stay in jail will humble him.

'Squatters need not be wiped out by development'



IRATE residents of a squatter colony in Quezon City take a gallant stand in yet another demolition job by government forces.

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may have to look deeper into the plight of the urban poor when she celebrates her 100th day in office on Monday.

No less than three million people would be left homeless by "anti-people" development projects all over the country under the Macapagal administration, records by the League of Urban Poor for Action (Lupa) showed.

"There's really nothing wrong with development projects as long as the poor are included in the development," Primo Amparo of the Mamamayan para sa Karapatang Bayan said during Monday's forum in a squatter colony in Malabon.

"Squatters don't have to be wiped out by development projects," Jimmy Regalario, secretary general of the Kilusan Tungo sa Pambansang Tangkilikan (Katapat), said in Filipino.

The planned construction of the Manila North Rail Transit would raze around 215,000 houses in Paco, Manila, Calamba, Laguna, and Mabalacat, Pampanga, records showed.

The upgrading of the Batangas pier and the Cebu ports would affect 91,000 families, Lupa added.

The rehabilitation of the Pasig River and the Sucol and Tullahan Rivers in Malabon, Lupa records showed, would displace 98,000 families.

In Malabon, around 20,000 residents have been staying in makeshift tents made of parachute fabric beside a garbage-filled creek in Barangay Tonsuya after a mysterious fire razed their houses in Paradise Village, a disputed squatter colony.

Residents believe the area was deliberately burned to force them to leave. Ms Arroyo and local officials recently visited the community to offer cups of *lugaw* (congee).

During Monday's forum, residents chanted: "*Ang kailangan namin ay bahay, hindi lugaw* (What we need are houses, not congee)."

"President Arroyo is not earning any popularity points from the Filipino people with her appalling lack of consistency in her pronouncements in her actions," said Millet Morante of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya.

Their condition, Malabon residents said, have worsened under Ms Arroyo for they have allegedly lost both their jobs and houses.

"*Ibalik si Erap* (We want Estrada back)," said Lupa president Julieta de Paz.

The urban poor blamed President Arroyo for the proliferation of squatters in Metro Manila and for the alleged relentless demolition of squatter colonies.

"Arroyo is the root of all these problems when she spearheaded the country's entry in the World Trade Organization when she was still senator," Regalario said.

The WTO membership, he said, has displaced thousands of people in the provinces and forced them to settle in squatter areas in Metro Manila.

Shabu Queen, 19, falls in buy-bust

POLICE arrested the other day a 19-year-old girl, said to be a notorious drug pusher, for yielding 90 grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu" with an estimated street value of P90,000 during a buy-bust operation in Caloocan.

Operatives of the Caloocan Police Station Investigation and Intelligence Division yesterday filed drug charges against Maricel Dumado of 227 Palanca St., Quiapo, Manila.

Police were hunting Maricel's relative Ansary Dumado, who allegedly helped the suspect in selling illegal drugs in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan.

After placing the suspect under surveillance, Caloocan Police decided to set up a buy-bust operation with SPO2 Felimon Arenas and PO1 Rommel Castro posing as buyers.

At about 5 p.m last Tuesday, Arenas and Castro arrested Maricel Dumado as she was handing them 22.57 grams of shabu worth P22,000 at the corner of Gen. Tirona Street and Edsa in Bagong Barrio.

The suspect yielded an additional 67.83 grams of shabu upon inspection.

Supt. Dionicio Borromeo, SIID chief, said Dumado was responsible for the proliferation of illegal drugs in Bagong Barrio.

The suspect is detained at the Caloocan Police Headquarters. *Christian Esguerra and Paul Ernest Lazaro*

Ipe Salvador trailing in Mandaluyong race

By Christian V. Esguerra

SALVADOR

ACTOR Phillip Salvador, tagged early as a heavy favorite in the vice mayoral race in Mandaluyong City, was reported trailing in a close race with incumbent Jesse Cruz, a survey showed yesterday.

According to a survey conducted by Strategic Polls from April 16 to 22, Salvador was trailing Cruz, 49 percent against 39 percent, three weeks before the elections. Twelve percent of the respondents were undecided.

The movie actor has made himself very visible even before the campaign season started by visiting the city's depressed communities. He remained a supporter of Joseph Estrada even after the former president's ouster.

The Stratpol survey showed candidates of the Lakas-People Power Coalition as heavy favorites in all but two of the city's 27 barangays.

Incumbent Mayor Benhur Abalos has taken a commanding 61-30 percent lead over oppositionist Ernesto Domingo in the mayoral race, the survey showed. Nine percent of the respondents remained undecided.

Abalos defeated Domingo by some 14,000 votes in the 1998 elections.

Abalos' running mate Rep. Neptali Gonzales Jr. leads newcomer Angie Domingo-Buan, 77 percent-15 percent, in the race for the city's lone congressional seat, the survey showed.

Lakas-PPC candidates, mostly members of the anti-Estrada "Kangkong Brigade," are also leading in Mandaluyong's two city council districts, according to the survey.

The candidates were Epifanio de Guzman, Luisito Espinosa, Danny de Guzman, Teresita Pillas, Aida David, and Gene Nuguit in District 1, and Narciso Bernardo, Cesar Bartolome, Rene Sta. Maria, Darius Razon-Apacionado, Che-che Pablo-Santos, and Titus Francisco of District II.

Igorot pair sentenced to life for drug raps

By Jojo Arazas
and Roy Jolito

A MUNTINLUPA judge yesterday sentenced to life two Ifugao natives arrested five years ago for possessing more than 72 kilos of dried marijuana.

Judge Alberto Lerma of regional trial court branch 256 meted out life terms to Maria Dumalangay, 50, and Benito Tugina, 33, both natives of Hingoyon, Ifugao Province, and residents of San Jose Subdivision, Alabang, Muntinlupa.

Lerma also ordered the accused to each pay P500,000 in damages.

On September 4, 1996, members of the Muntinlupa Police intelligence division and drug enforcement group were conducting a drug operation against one Loreta Banaw-ol who allegedly tried to sell P700 worth of shabu just outside the house at about 11 p.m., court records showed.

But Banaw-ol fled and entered the house. Police gave chase and, inside the house, they were surprised to see Dumalangay and Tugina packing hundreds of dried marijuana bricks into plastic bags.

During the trial, Dumalangay and Tugina pleaded not guilty, saying they went to Banaw-ol's house to deliver Igorot weavings and were unaware of the presence of marijuana.

The two also pointed out that the arresting lawmen had no search warrant, making their raid on Banaw-ol's house and seizure of marijuana illegal.

But Lerma gave more weight to the lawmen's account of the drug operation against Banaw-ol and their subsequent discovery of Dumalangay and Tugina.

In a four-page decision, Lerma ruled that the arrest was legal since it was made in the course of a legitimate police operation.

Woman killed, husband injured by speedy truck

A 59-YEAR-OLD woman was killed while her 62-year-old husband was injured after they were run over by a speeding truck in Caloocan City yesterday morning.

Aurora Ayala of 29 Interior Sociego St., Tinajeros, Malabon died of head and body injuries at the Manila Central University Hospital in Caloocan.

Her husband Artagnan was still under observation in the same hospital.

The victims were crossing MacArthur Highway to open a nearby stall at about 5 a.m. when a Fuso truck with license Plate No. WJP-478 hit them, investigation showed.

The truck, driven by 36-year-old Gilbert Mina of 45 Old Capitol Site, Diliman, Quezon City, was about to turn left to MacArthur Highway coming from Caimito Road.

The impact threw Artagnan several meters away, while his wife was run over by the left front tire of the truck, said case investigator PO3 Rodelio Asuncion of the Caloocan Traffic Management Unit.

Aurora died at 5:46 a.m. while being treated by Dr. Yuri Mateo of the MCU hospital.

The driver, who surrendered after the incident, is facing charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and physical injuries. He is detained at the Caloocan Police Headquarters. *Christian Esguerra and Paul Ernest Lazaro*

No remorse from jobless man who hacked his uncle

By Christian V. Esguerra

"*BUTI naawa pa ako sa kanya at hindi ko siya pinatay* (He's lucky I took pity on him and did not kill him)."

This was how Arturo Nemenzo, 31, felt after he hacked his 50-year-old uncle inside their house in Caloocan City yesterday morning.

Nemenzo, of C. Name Street, 2nd Avenue, Caloocan, apparently became fed up with his uncle, Victor Lumayno, who has been scolding the suspect for being a jobless bum, police said.

Nemenzo showed no sign of remorse after he used a bolo and a 29-inch fan knife to gut his uncle, saying he could have instantly killed Lumayno had he not taken pity on him.

Lumayno is in critical condition at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, said PO3 Arnel de Guzman of the Caloocan Police Investigation Division.

Lumayno had allegedly scolded Nemenzo on several occasions for staying in his house and having no job, police said.

"*May anay sa bahay* (There are termites in the house)," Lumayno allegedly said on Tuesday, referring to Nemenzo.

At about 3 a.m. yesterday, Nemenzo drank several glasses of gin with a certain Boy Labog before he reportedly decided to get back at his uncle.

Minutes later, Nemenzo took a bolo and hacked his uncle on the back. He then planted a fan knife on Lumayno's abdomen.

The suspect is now detained at the Caloocan Police Headquarters.

METRO CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Ex-Erap press secretary bats for Joey Marquez

FORMER Press Secretary Rod Reyes, an independent congressional candidate, said the progress and development achieved by Parañaque City in the past six years was a product of good governance.

He said that Parañaque mayor Joey Marquez has transformed the city into a "millennium-ready city where everyone could hope for a good future."

He noted Marquez's accomplishments like the city-wide cementing of roads, college scholarship for 300 poor but deserving students, construction of many school buildings and classrooms, construction of a three-floor air-conditioned with escalator public market in La Heurta, construction of a modern five-floor hospital with service helicopter beside the old Parañaque Community Hospital, efforts in helping city residents to get tap water service from the MWSI.

Reyes also pointed out the mayor's genuine participation in police action to solve crimes such as the arrest and filing of criminal cases against the suspects in the rape-slay of 21-year-old Claudine Feliciano.

Reyes vowed to support Marquez's program of governance should he win in the congressional race on May 14.

Upon learning of Reyes' acknowledgment, Marquez vowed to continue and strengthen his effort in bringing real progress to the city.

"I am a public servant. Everything in my political responsibilities came from my constituents, thus I must give justice to my duty by serving everyone at my best," Marquez said.

PEACEFUL
APO Service
Party List

LEO'S CHOICE

Stage actor-singer Leo Valdez gives the thumbs-up sign for the Apo Service party list. Valdez, who earned critical acclaim for his role as the Engineer in "Miss Saigon," has endorsed party list aspirant Apo for its commitment to bring education to the countryside and to overhaul the outmoded system of farming in the country by maximizing the use of technology.

Peewee leads burning of video karera units

PASAY CITY Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad yesterday led police officials in the burning of 17 video karera machines that were confiscated on Tuesday as part of the local government's drive to stop illegal gambling in the city.

"Since day one we have not stopped our drive against illegal gambling. We will pursue this effort until we totally eliminate all forms of destructive vices in the city," Trinidad said.

Police Inspector Turreda Ogalinola, Pasay City Hall police detachment chief reported that the city police have already confiscated and burned several dozens of video karera machines of illegal gambling groups in Pasay.

"There's a strong working system of the Pasay City police force that is tasked to handle this case. And we are confident that we could be successful in this effort especially with the full support of Mayor Trinidad," Ogalinola said.

Ogalinola said police seized the video karera machines from various secret illegal gambling houses on Homildad, Harrison, Sto. Niño and Protacio Streets.

Ogalinola's team has also arrested 10 female "sex workers" who were reportedly caught plying their trade at the Rotonda on Taft Avenue in Pasay City.

Aksyon picks Raymundo in Pasig mayoral contest

THE AKSYON Demokratiko (Aksyon) national leadership has named Mario Raymundo as the mayoral candidate of Pasig City following the withdrawal of Jeff Pastor from the race.

DECS Secretary Raul Roco, Aksyon Demokratiko national president, will officially proclaim this week the local Aksyon candidates in the city.

Lawyer Augusto "Bobbit" Sanchez, Pasig City-Aksyon chair, said Raymundo is the best answer to end the political dynasty of the Eusebios in the city. Raymundo has served as Pasig City mayor in 1986.

Raymundo filed his certificate of substitution and nomination after Wainright Rivera, an earlier substitute, gave way to Raymundo in a bid to solidify the opposition's chances in the May polls.

Raymundo's platform is anchored on a graft-free governance and cooperative-building scheme where contracts for the delivery of basic services will be shouldered by the local cooperatives as a potent force in community building.

ROTC killers . . . (From page A19)

The witnesses, whose identities are being kept under wraps, are residents of Lawton Plaza, Manila which is near the Pasig River.

"The identification was based on the pictures of the suspects presented to the witnesses," Arugay said.

The witnesses claimed Chua was already dead when he was thrown into the river near the Lawton Plaza.

Chua's body was fished out of Pasig River near the Bureau of Immigration building on March 18.

His body, which bore torture marks, was wrapped in a brown carpet. His hands and feet were tied with shoelaces and his head wrapped in packing tape.

Probers identified Chua based on a dogtag found on his neck.

Chua's parents said he went missing on March 15. His body was found three days later.

Chua's father, Welson, had accused Tejares and other ROTC officials of masterminding the abduction and killing of his son.

Tejares, who flatly denied the allegations earlier, has now gone into hiding.

Chua, a second year engineering student, was said to have caught the ire of ROTC officials and members of the Corps of Cadets when he exposed the alleged extortion and other irregularities going on at the UST ROTC.

In a complaint filed with the defense department, Chua and other cadet officers claimed that UST students were required to pay a certain amount if they did not wish to attend the weekend training.

Chua's exposé came out in the campus paper, the Varsitarian.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 26, 2001
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 5:27-33
Gospel: Jn 3:31-36

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "He who comes from above is above all; he who comes from the earth belongs to the earth and his words, too, are earthly. The One who comes from heaven speaks of the things he has seen and heard; he bears witness to this but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does receive his testimony acknowledges the truthfulness of God.

The one sent by God speaks God's words and gives the Spirit without measure. For the Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything into his hands. Whoever believes in the Son lives with eternal life, but he who will not believe in the Son will never know life and always faces the justice of God."

Commentary:

This short discourse, though parallel to an earlier discourse in verses 16-21, follows John the Baptist's testimony to Jesus, whose pre-eminence over him he readily acknowledged but not so easily by his disciples. In the context of Asia, wherein religious traditions have thrived from of old even before the Christian one, it is essential that we recognize the workings of the Spirit in them all. The time is past (in fact, there should not have been any!) when we may flaunt the superiority of us Christians. We witness to truthfulness of what we profess not by any bombastic or apologetic discourse but by humble Christlike deeds.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (ADMINISTRATIVE LAW)—Commission on Audit—Under the Constitution, the Commission on Audit (COA) shall have the power, authority and duty to examine, audit and settle all accounts pertaining to the revenue and receipts of, and expenditures or uses of funds and property, owned or held in trust by, or pertaining to, the government, or any of its subdivisions, agencies or instrumentalities. In the exercise of its broad powers, particularly its auditing functions, the COA is guided by certain principles and state policies to assure that government funds shall be managed, expended, utilized in accordance with law and regulations, and safeguarded against loss or wastage with a view to ensuring the efficiency, economy and effectiveness in the operations of government. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Purisima, Laysa v. Commission on Audit, G.R. No. 128134, October 18, 2000]

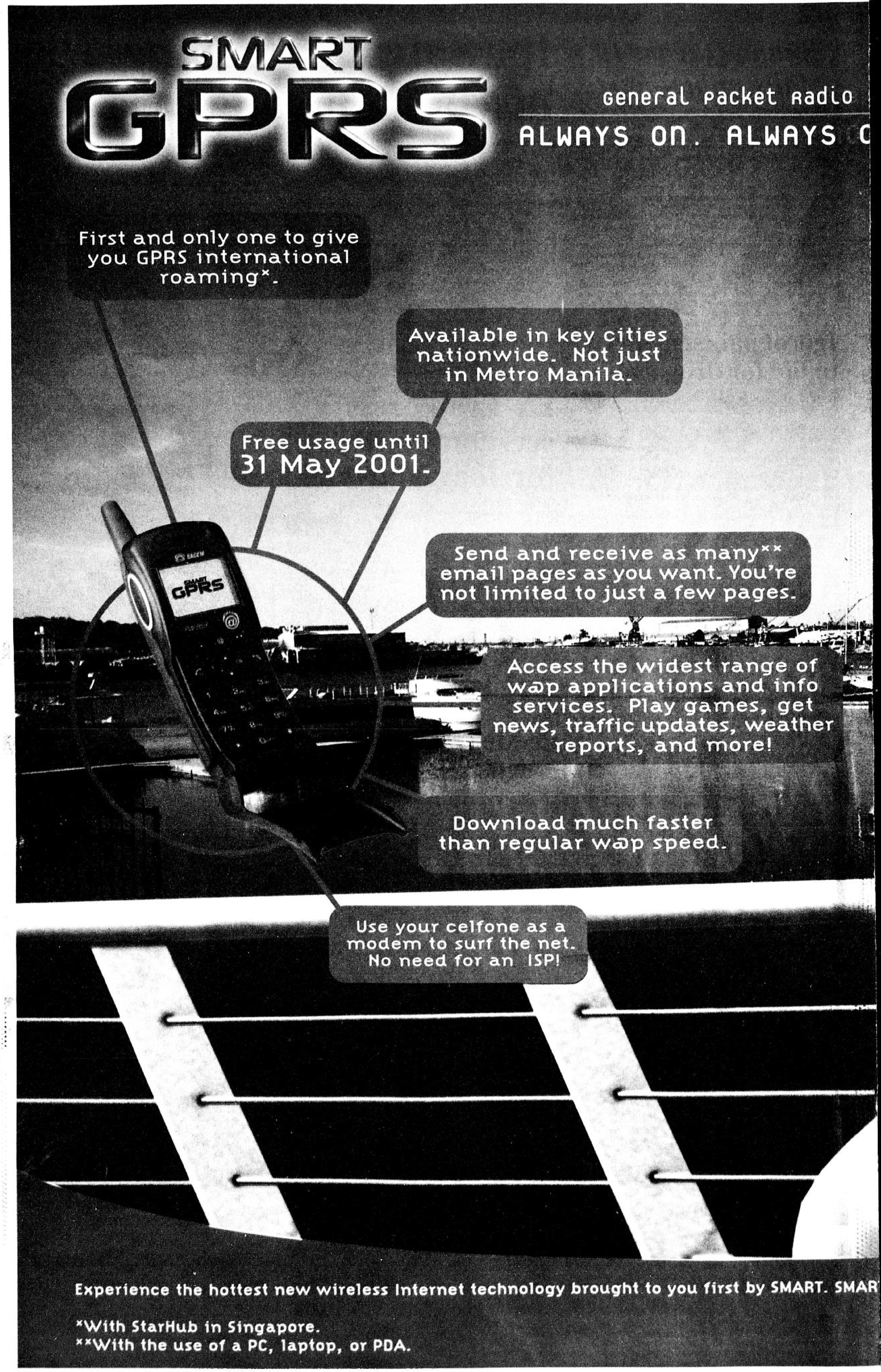
Digest by R.B. Vera

OLD NAVY
WBC
ROYAL
HOT

'RUMBLIN BY THE MOUNTAIN'

JESS YUSON

Participants in Saturday's 'Rumblin by the Mountain II' boxing card in Kidapawan, North Cotabato pose during a press conference at the Lotus Garden Hotel on Mabini Street, Manila yesterday. Brothers Ernesto (fifth from left) and Juanito Rubillar (second from right) display their WBC international championship belts. Also in the photo (from left) are Thailand's Wethya Sakmuangklang, challenger to WBC international junior featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao, Bebot Elorde, Thai fighter Somthawin Singwongcha, North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol and Fahsang Pow Pongsawang, another Thai challenger.



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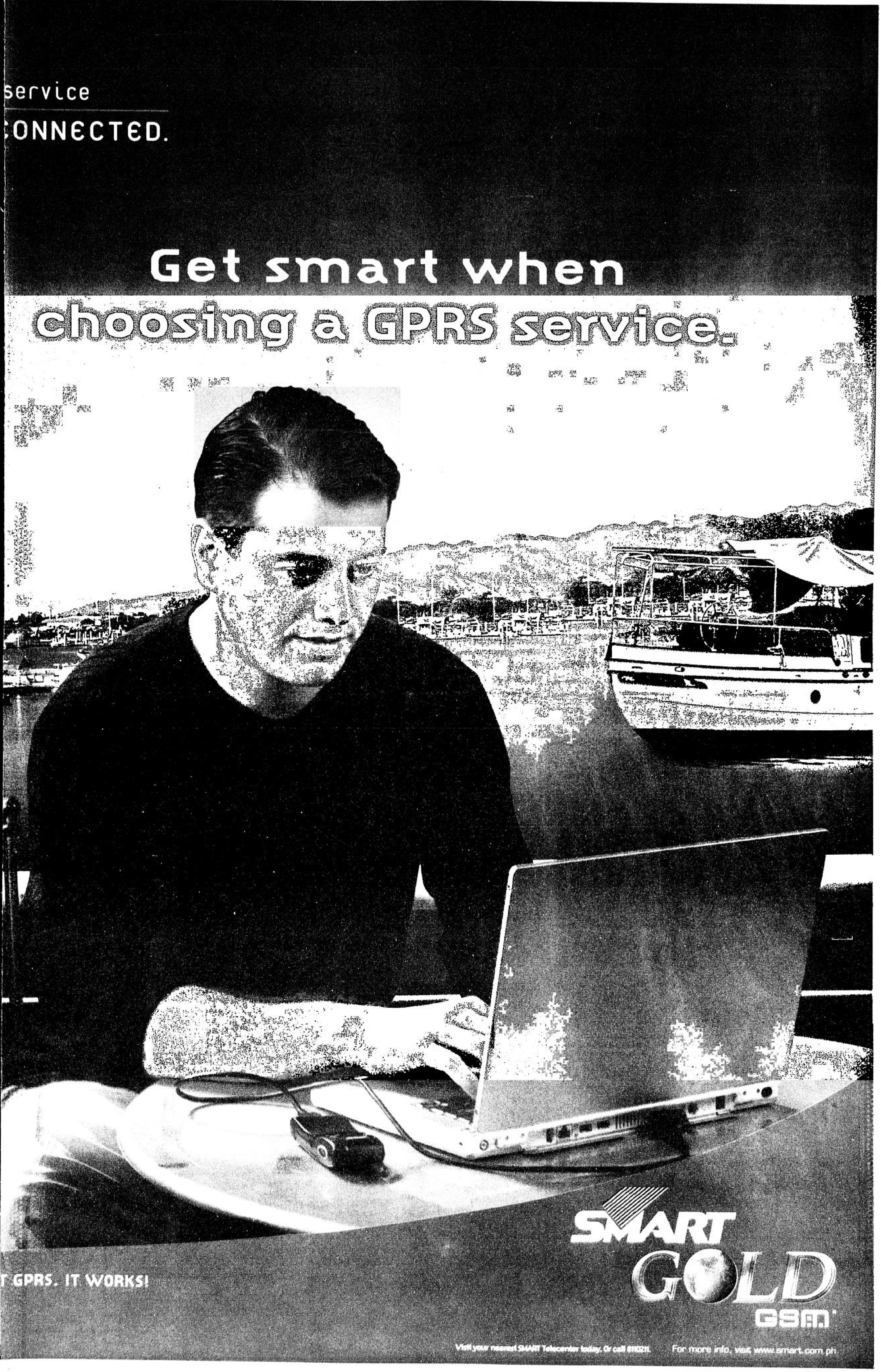

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3	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MEXICAN
4	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
7	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERASO
8	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
3	DTS	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MEXICAN
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MADERASO
7	DOLBY SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
8	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	AIR BUD 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERASO
2	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MEXICAN
5	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA... INA
6	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MEXICAN
8	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
9	DOLBY SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
10	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER

SM CITY MANILA 5238240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	SWEET NOVEMBER
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	DOLBY SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANTI-TRUST
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MEXICAN
7	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
8	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
10	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
11	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR. 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	EVANGELINE 14
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
10	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
2	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
4	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
5	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
7	DTS	THE MEXICAN
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE CROW
10	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
12	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3

SM SOUTHMALL 8046888 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
2	ULTRA SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	ULTRA SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MADERASO
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MEXICAN
9	ULTRA SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
10	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CROW

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
2	ULTRA SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
5	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS IN PARIS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
7	DOLBY SURROUND	

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
5	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MEXICAN
6	ULTRA SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	THE GIFT

SM PAMPANGA 7128016

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MEXICAN
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE CROW
3	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MADERASO
6	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

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2 THE MEXICAN
3 SWEET NOVEMBER
4 3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

GLORIETTA 4 (All Digital Sound)

1 FINDING FORRESTER — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2 THE MEXICAN — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE MEXICAN THX — in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 BLACK & WHITE (Phil. Premiere) — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5 DOUBLE TAKE — in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 SWEET NOVEMBER — in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 ANTI - TRUST — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1 FINDING FORRESTER — in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 THE MEXICAN — in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST — in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1 THE MEXICAN THX — in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 ANTI-TRUST — in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 SWEET NOVEMBER — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 RUGRATS IN PARIS — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST — in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1	(SDDS)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
2	(SDDS)	CROUCHING TIGER
3	(DTS)	RUGRATS IN PARIS
4	(GOLD DTS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
5	(GOLD DOLBY)	ANTI-TRUST
6	(GOLD SDDS)	THE CROW
7	(GOLD DOLBY)	THE MEXICAN
8	[illegible]	AIR BUD 3
9	[illegible]	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
10	[illegible]	ABAKADA ..INA

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2		
3	(DTS)	
4		INIT NG DUGO
5		
6	(DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX		

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1	(DOLBY)	
2	(DTS)	
3		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	ABAKADA..INA
3	MADERAZO

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1		CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3		3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4	(DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE MEXICAN
5		ATTACK FORCE

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	MADERAZO
2	ABAKADA ..INA
3	RESERVE
4	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
5	THE MEXICAN
6	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
7	ALIW MASARAP ANG BAWAL
8	ATTACK FORCE

Uniwide Metromall
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074

1	
2	AUTUMN IN NEW YORK
3	FRIENDS AND LOVER
4	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	—
6	

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152

1	BIYAHENG LANGIT
2	
3	THE PORNOGRAPHER
4	THE NINTHGATE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ABAKADA..INA
2	WOMAN ON TOP

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	INIT NG DUGO
3	MS. CONGENIALITY

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
A	GINGER SNAPS

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626

1	
3	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1	(DOLBY)	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2		RESERVE
3		RESERVE
4		ATTACK FORCE
5		THE CROW
6		ABAKADA ...INA
7	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN
8	(SDDS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
9	(DOLBY)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	
6	

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3		MADERASO
4	(SDDS)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
5		ABAKADA ..INA
6	(DOLBY)	ATTACK FORCE
7	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN
8		SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
9		SWEET NOVEMBER

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3		ABAKADA INA
4		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
5	(SDDS)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6		SWEET NOVEMBER
7	(DOLBY)	ATTACK FORCE
8		MADERAZO

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2		ABAKADA ..INA
3	(DTS)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4		NARIONIG MO BA ANG LATEST
5	(SDDS)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6	(DOLBY)	
7	(DOLBY)	

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	ONE NIGHT STAND
Lords	MADERAZO
Jennet	TEQUILLA BODY SHOT

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	THE MEXICAN
2	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	RESERVE
4	ATTACK FORCE

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238

1	THE MEXICAN
2	MADERAZO
3	ATTACK FORCE
4	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
5	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

1	MADERAZO
2	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	EVANGELINE 14
4	ABAKADA ..INA
5	ATTACK FORCE
6	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	ABAKADA..INA
3	MADERAZO

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1		SWEET NOVEMBER
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	(DTS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
3	(DOLBY)	THE MEXICAN
4		THE SEDUCER

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	(SDDS)	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2		MADERAZO
3		3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1	(DOLBY)	SWEET NOVEMBER
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	(DTS)	THE MEXICAN
4		THE SEDUCER
5		PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	THE MEXICAN
3	THEY NEST

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	THE MEXICAN
3	THEY NEST

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	THE GIFT
2	ABAKADA...INA
3	THE SEDUCER

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	SWEET NOVEMBER
3	THE MEXICAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	SINS OF THE NIGHT
3	INIT SA DUGO
4	THEY NEST

Cabuyao
CINEMAS TEL. (049) 531-4808

1	(DTS)	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	(DTS)	SWEET NOVEMBER

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ALIW MASARAP ANG BAWAL
2	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	MADERASO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	ABAKADA..INA
3	THE SEDUCER
4	AIR BUD 3

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	INIT NG DUGO
2	ABAKADA INA

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	ABAKADA INA
2	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	(DOLBY EX)	THE MEXICAN
2		NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
3		SWEET NOVEMBER
4	(DTS EX)	THE CROW

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THX DOLBY dts SDDS

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Geneva performs in Cebu

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1. THE MEXICAN
2. SWEET NOVEMBER
3. NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
4. NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
5. ABAKADA...INA
6. 3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
7. ANTI TRUST

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2. 3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3. ABAKADA...INA
4. SWEET NOVEMBER
5. NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
6. NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST

BACOLOD (034)441-0453

1. THE GIFT
2. THE MEXICAN
3. AIR BUD 3
4. SAVE THE LAST DANCE
5. QUILLS
6. THE SEDUCER

DOLBY dts SDDS

IT'S BOUND to be a frollicking party as pop dance diva Geneva Cruz unleashes her brand of high-octane dance music at the Ayala Carpark in Cebu City on Friday, April 27.

A perennial crowd favorite, Geneva will dazzle the crowd with her infectious grooves that will surely keep the dance floor burning until the wee hours.

To spice up the Friday night party are a bevy of gin-drinking games and other fun-filled contests, as well as high-grooving performance by the Power Jam and Chemistry Band.

The free concert, dubbed "True Blue Summer," will also serve as the official launching pad of La Tondeña's latest line, GSM Blue. Like its model-endorser, GSM Blue comes on smooth, hip and sexy.

Expect a variety of dance favorites as Geneva dishes out her repertoire including the top hits of Christina Aguilera, Gloria Estefan, Jennifer Lopez and her own favorites.

The sexy songstress has also become more visible on TV. She is now one of the regular hosts of the top-rating Sunday noontime show, "Asap." She has also signed up with Viva Films and is slated to start her first movie project.

At the same time, Geneva is preparing for her new album under Universal Records.

This month, Geneva is featured on the cover of FHM Magazine, which also allots an eight-page spread for her.

CRUZ

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ABAKADA...INA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ANTI-TRUST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE CROW
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	THE MEXICAN
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	ATTACK FORCE
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
MIRAMAR	VIRGIN WIFE/TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
ODEON-2	ATTACK FORCE
ROBEN	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
TANDEM-1	ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON
TANDEM-2	EVANGELINE 14
TIMES	PROOF OF LIFE/DEMON GATE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	BAYAD NA PATI KALULUWA MO
QUEZON-1	ALIW MATAMIS NA LASON
REMAR	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
REMAR-2	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE MEXICAN
CINEMA-2	GERMAN FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ATTACK FORCE
CINEMA-2	MADERASO
CINEMA-3	THE CROW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RUGRATS IN PARIS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DOUBLE TAKE
CINEMA-6	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
CINEMA-7	THE SEDUCER
CINEMA-8	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	THE MEXICAN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
CINEMA-12	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-14	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-15	ABAKADA.. INA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	DI MATIGIL ANG INIT / HIYAS
CINEMA-3	MS. CONGENIALITY
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	ANTI-TRUST
CINEMA-2	RUGRATS IN PARIS
CINEMA-3	THE MEXICAN
CINEMA-4	DOUBLE TAKE
CINEMA-5	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-6	SWEET NOVEMBER

Fantasy drama

YOUNG stars Shaina Magdayao and Serena Dalrymple star with drama king Christopher de Leon in the fantasy-drama, "Wansapanataym," 9 tonight on the Pinoy Blockbuster Channel.

Ana (Shaina) is an orphan who makes a living selling sampaguitas. Barbiel (Serena) is an angel who has yet to prove her worth and earn her wings. Gary (Christopher) is a man bestowed a second lease of life. They are three beings about to make the most unforgettable convergence of their lives.

The movie is directed by Johnny Manahan and produced by Star Cinema.

Pinoy Blockbuster Channel airs on SkyCable, SunCable and other quality cable operators nationwide.

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THE MEXICAN
(PG - RT - 2:02)
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Brad Pitt
James Gandolfini

April 26 - Thursday
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8:45 PM - Closed (LRP Foundation / Home Radio)
11:15 PM - The Mexican

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Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Voice of the century

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FRANK Sinatra has been voted "voice of the century" by BBC radio listeners. He's followed by **Elvis Presley, Nat "King" Cole, Ella Fitzgerald** and **Bing Crosby**.

Sinatra is a popular choice, but is Elvis really a better singer than Ella? Is Nat better than Bing? That depends more on the listener, rather than the singers.

So, what does "voice of the century" really mean? The best singer, the most popular performer, or the entertainer who has set the most important trend in the music world?—Or all of the above?

In sixth to 10th places are **John Lennon, Aretha Franklin, Billie Holiday, Barbra Streisand** and **Freddie Mercury**. The plot—and contradictions—thicken. This is a survey of *British* music fans, remember, which is why Mercury did so well.

And then again is Lennon better than Streisand *as a singer?* Nay-sayers abound.

What about a similar survey of Filipino singers—will a local radio station do the honors? The BBC phone-in survey garnered a total of 44,000 votes. Would the local version do as well?

Who would top the list, in your estimation? And what would the main criterion be? Qality of voice and vocal performance over popularity, one would think.

In that case, the top five could come from a short list that would include the likes of —?

"**Dulce** or **Dulce Din**," shout the members of our peanut gallery. "**Leo Valdez** or **Lea Salonga**! **Bert Nievera** or **Martin**! **Basil** or **Gary**! **Ruben Tagalog**, **Kuh Ledesma**, **Eddie Mesa**, **Annie Brazil**, **Rico J**—!

Your nominees, dear readers?

German filmfest

THE SECOND German Film Week in Manila opens today, April 26, at cinema 2 of Shangri-La Plaza Mall, and ends on May 1. The opening film tonight is "Late Show" by **Helmut Dietl**.

Starting April 27, there will be three screenings daily, at 3 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Other films on view are **Frieder Schaich**'s "Otomo," about an asylum seeker; **Michael Bartlett**'s romantic drama, "A Fatal Affair;" **Tom Wigand**'s "Soccer Rules!" and **Thomas Bahmann**'s tragicomic "Our Island in the South Pacific."

Young directors' movies are also featured: **Klaus Kramer**'s macabre comedy, "Three Chinamen with a Double-Bass," **Veit Helmer**'s idiosyncratic "Tuvalu" and **Hannu Salonen**'s award-winning "Downhill City." Call 635-2079.

DECS tie-up for 'Abakada . . . Ina'

VIVA Films' current movie, "Abakada . . . Ina," is about the problem of illiteracy, so it stands to reason that the Literacy Coordinating Council of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports is brainstorming with the film's producers on how best to boost their common cause.

It would be even better if the DECS as a whole endorses the film and urges students to watch it. After all, only a few movies about the importance of education are made locally, and students would get motivated to appreciate the value of going to school more when they see the negative effects of illiteracy on the movie's protagonist (played by **Lorna Tolentino**).

$2M for four days' work

ACTING great **Marlon Brando** makes movies only rarely these days, but when he does, he gets top dollar. His latest big-screen outing is a cameo role in "Scary Movie 2," and he's getting paid a cool $2 M for just four days' work!

Brando has been tapped to play a priest performing an exorcism. Unfortunately, work on his scenes has had to be deferred because the 77-year-old actor has fallen ill with pneumonia.

"Scary Movie 2" is the sequel to last year's hit horror-comedy movie starring **Shawn** and **Marlon Wayans**, and directed by their brother, **Keenan Ivory**.

We hope that Brando recovers soon so he can shoot for the horror spoof. But what we would *really* like the senior actor to do is play a major movie role that will once again challenge him to do his very best work.

It's been decades since "The Godfather," "Last Tango in Paris" and "A Dry White Season," but Brando has added little of note to his body of work. If his health holds up, he still has a couple more great performances left in him.

Janno, Zsa Zsa 'High on Love' in Antipolo

SHOWS

ANTIPOLO CITY is in for a great musical event as Viva Concerts mounts "High on Love," April 28 at the Ynares Center.

"High on Love" gathers some of the country's top artists—Janno Gibbs, Freestyle and Zsa Zsa Padilla—who are expected to perform their hits as well as today's hottest pop singles.

Janno is widely known as one of the country's most reputable balladeers. Though he also excels in the movies and TV, he still regards performing as his first love. Janno hosts the Sunday noontime show, "SOP" on GMA 7.

Freestyle is arguably one of the best pop bands in the local entertainment scene. Filling up the 17,000 sitting capacity of the Big Dome last year in the first major concert is one of the many laurels of the band. Freestyle is also the band behind the success of such songs as "So Slow," "Before I Let You Go" and "This Time."

Zsa Zsa Padilla is tagged as the country's Divine Diva. She had had SRO concerts in every major venue in the Philippines and her reputation as a recording artist is unparalleled, with a string of multi-platinum hits to her credit. Zsa Zsa is one of the hosts of ABS-CBN's top rating noontime show, "Asap."

Tickets to "High on Love" are priced at P1,200, P800, P300 and P100 and are available at Araneta Ticketnet, SM Ticketnet, Viva Office (413-2572) and Video City outlets in Cainta Junction, Parang Marikina, Montalban, Concepcion in Marikina, Pasig Rotonda, San Mateo, Sta Lucia, Cainta, Taytay, Sta. Elena, Antipolo, Masinag, Rosario, P. Tuazon, Rejoice Supermarket and Lores Antipolo.

'In Tune' with Side A

THE MUSIC of the country's premier band, Side A, will once again warm the hearts and groove-up the veins of their fans as they perform for the first time at Crossroads 77 at 77 Mother Ignacia corner Sct. Reyes, Diliman, Quezon City.

In the concert titled "Side A in Tune . . . Forever," the band shall do cuts from their albums as well as covers of current pop hits. It will be at 8 p.m. on May 3.

Guest artists are soul diva Bituin Escalante and promising vocal group Quarter to 5.

The concert is presented by Unison Productions with Manila Bulletin and Joey Rhythms 92.3, CityLite 88.3, Crossover 105.1, 96.3 Wrock, 93.9WKC and Shure. It is a benefit for We Exalt You, Jesus! Foundation Inc.

Tickets are available at all TicketWorld outlets in National Bookstore branches and Tower Records, JIB Ticketing Office (752-6794) or at Unison Productions (890-0831 or 870-8920).

On April 27, Side A will also be seen in a special one-night concert at Hard Rock Café in Makati. Tickets at P350 each.

Parliament Syndicate will perform at Hard Rock on April 28.

For inquiries, call 893-4661 to 64.

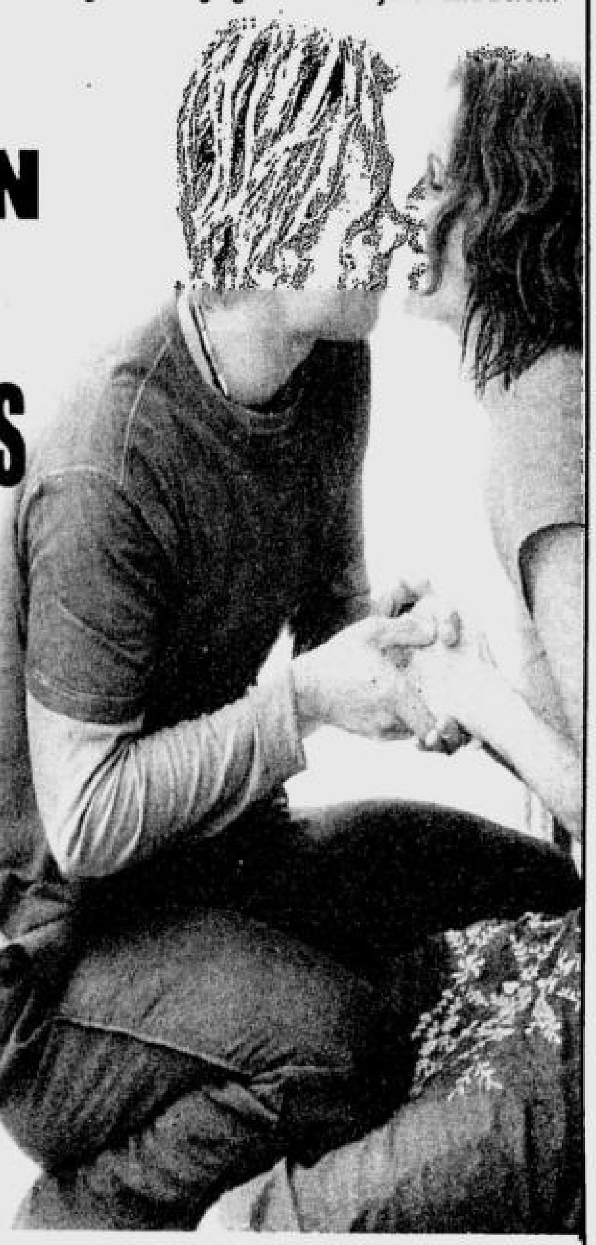
'One Divine Evening'

THE SAN Beda High School Glee Club and the Ateneo de Manila College Glee Club share their God-given talent for musical performance in "One Divine Evening," April 28 at the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat.

The choral groups will complement the solemnity of the Abbey by putting together a repertoire of different traditional spiritual songs, Gregorian chants, ecclesiastical hymns and Tagalog kundimans.

The San Beda High School Glee Club will be conducted by Antonio Africa, while the Ateneo de Manila College Glee Club will be led by musical director Prof. Joel Navarro.

For more details about the concert, call Ana Cayabyab of NBC Entertainment at 882-1622, local 196.



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
The film contains language and violence which young audiences may find disturbing.
Parents and guardians are strongly cautioned against bringing children 13 years and below.
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DOUBLE TAKE - P 13 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST - P 13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	SWEET NOVEMBER - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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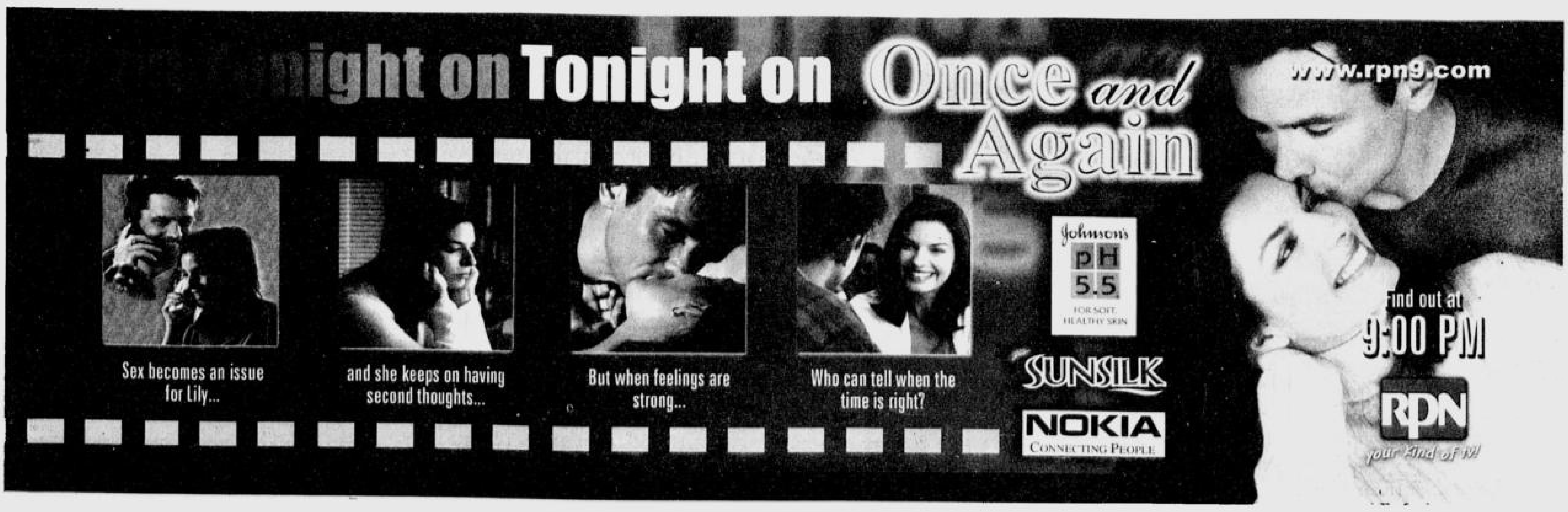
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0936, Series of 2001

Robin trades punches in new movie

ROBIN Padilla tries on a new role in his latest movie under Viva Films, "Buhay Kamao," scheduled for release in theaters soon.

In the movie, Robin is Pepe, a boxing enthusiast who lost a brother to the dangerous sport. Upon his parents' advise, Pepe also stopped engaging in the sport and opted to help his father with their vegetable business in Baguio.

However, circumstances force Pepe to go into boxing while earning the ire of his father Ador (Spanky Manikan).

Pepe then seeks comfort from his bosom buddies Abdon (Bobby Andrews), Badong aka Scarlet (John Lapus) and Dek Dek (Kristine Mangle), the youngest child of the former boxing coach of Pepe's brother who is like a kid sister to him.

The movie revolves around the hero-worship relationship between Dek Dek and Pepe and how it changes a person's perspective in life.

Adding spice to the movie is Vilma (Rica Peralejo), Pepe's next-door neighbor who always gets into a fight with her rich boyfriend Edwin (Raymond Bagatsing).

Others in the cast are David Bunevacs, Joonee Gamboa, Romy Diaz, Royette Padilla, James Sicangco, Amad Alcadra, Jon Antonio and Gigette Reyes.

Story and screenplay by Mel del Rosario under the direction of Joyce Bernal.

PADILLA. Plays a boxer in "Buhay Kamao."

Rugrats go to Paris

THE RUGRATS clan found adventure and thrills in their first feature film, "The Rugrats Movie." Now in "Rugrats in Paris—The Movie," they head overseas on a terrific new journey.

Nickelodeon Movies and Paramount Pictures have joined forces again in an animated feature film, the second motion picture based on Nickelodeon's award-winning "Rugrats" series.

"Rugrats in Paris-The Movie" is a continuation of the Rugrats' adventures that take them farther than they've ever gone, figuratively and literally.

Says "Rugrats in Paris" director Stig Bergqvist, "What is unique about the Rugrats is their broad appeal. We have in this movie a great story played on two different levels, one seen through the eyes of the babies and one through the eyes of the adults."

"This is a motion picture in the true sense of the word," says director Paul Demeyer. "The storyline is very poignant, and Paris provides a dramatic backdrop that we are accenting with incredible action. It's very exciting to work on a project that you know kids and adults will see and appreciate."

ENGINE OIL
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THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2001
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ▣ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

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Gov't to get 8 of 15 SMC board seats

By Clarissa S. Batino

STATE pension fund Government Service Insurance System has solicited enough proxies to get another board seat in San Miguel Corp.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia said in an interview that the pension fund will nominate Roberto Malonzo, GSIS executive vice president, to the board of the country's largest food and beverage company.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said with the additional board seat, the government would already have eight of the 15 seats in San Miguel.

He hinted that with a majority control, the government could already take over the chairmanship of the company from Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Garcia clarified, however, that as of this time, "there is no grand plan to replace Cojuangco."

"I am an independent director and I would like to assess objectively whether Cojuangco is competent or not. But it seems SMC's corporate secretary (Francis Jardeleza) had been avoiding me when I ask for papers to study Cojuangco's performance," the GSIS chief said.

Garcia declined to say how many proxies he was able to solicit but a government source earlier said the GSIS must get proxies equivalent to 150 million shares before it could get another seat.

The GSIS has more than 7 percent in San Miguel equivalent to a board seat and a half while the Social Security System has about 5 percent, or enough for one board seat.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government has sequestered 27 percent of San Miguel, or the equivalent of five more board seats.

However, five directors appointed by the PCGG during the time of former President Estrada have refused to give up their post. Malonzo's appointment, Garcia said, is also problematic since San Miguel is citing a Jan. 20, 2001 deadline for nominations to the SMC board.

Garcia said the GSIS has filed a case at the Mandaluyong regional trial court to allow the pension fund to nominate Malonzo to the San Miguel board.

"Our only plan is to have the government represented in the board. The five directors appointed during Estrada's term should already resign," said the GSIS chief.

Aside from the case filed by the GSIS, the Office of the Solicitor General has filed a plea with the Supreme Court to seek the ouster of five Estrada nominees in San Miguel and to lift the Jan. 20 deadline imposed by the company's by-laws restraining the government from nominating new directors in SMC.

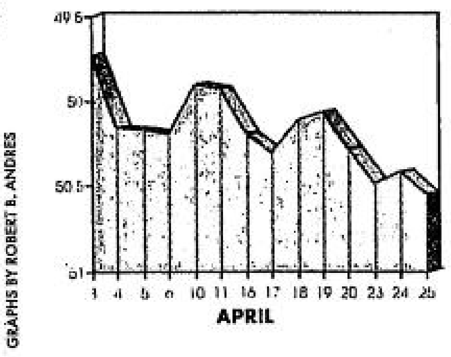
The Macapagal administration is expected to nominate to the SMC board Renato

GOV'T/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱50.55 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 25, 2001

¥122.38 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 122.38 as of 5 p.m., April 25, 2001

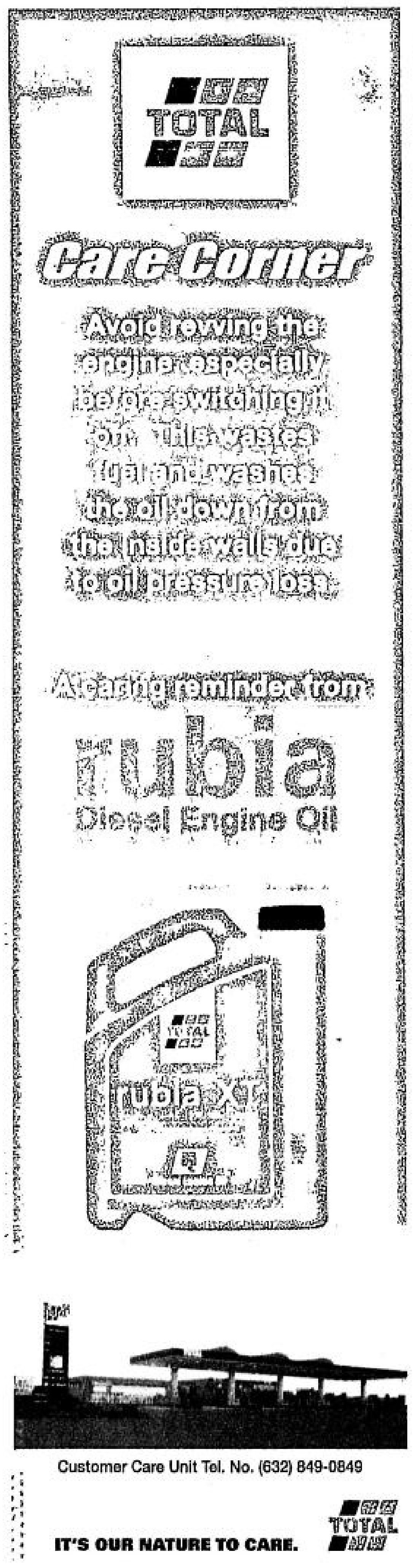
GOLD:$263.90/264.40
per ounce Hong Kong, April 25, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares up sharply

SHARE prices ended sharply higher yesterday as investors cheered the long-awaited decision to issue an arrest warrant against ousted leader Joseph Estrada on plunder charges, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index broke its 1,460-point trendline resistance with a gain of 18.18 points, or 1.3 percent, to close at 1,462.18, after rising 0.5 percent Tuesday. *AP*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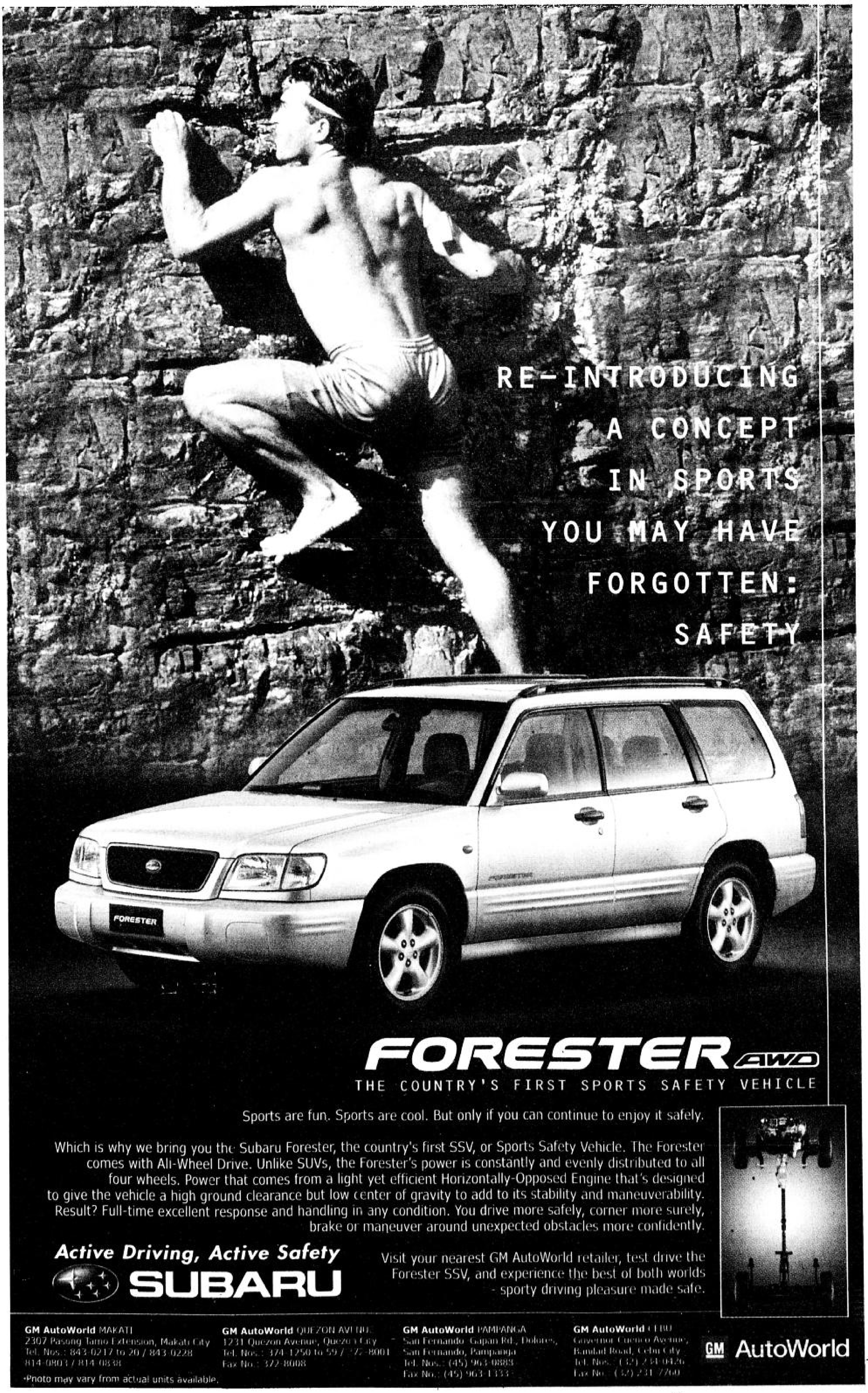

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•Photo may vary from actual units available.

Low-end order

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THIS time of year, for those of us who cannot afford air-conditioning, is known as the "hotter" season. Other times, it is simply hot. Technically, and this is for the sake of some Cabinet members of this cute administration of Gloriaetta, it is known as "summer."

But it's not true that Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo talked about the weather, i.e. hotter versus summer, when the piqued Gloriaetta walked out of her Cabinet meeting recently. I have to clear up this issue. Actually, Romulo talked about visions.

By tradition, anyway, when the weather turns from "hot" to "hotter," or when we get nothing but talk of visions from our supposed "economic pointman," whichever comes first, you know instantly it's already the season of annual stockholders' meetings.

I don't know if you like attending them for a hobby. Let me warn you, nevertheless, at least this year, they can be life-threatening. If you are not careful, you may go kill yourself. So much pessimism! Where has all that "confidence" gone?

* * *

NOW I kid you not, and everybody is waiting for this cute administration to step up from "core beliefs" and "visions," and just please to move on to some concrete steps for the economy. Such an impatience you can feel in all those stockholders' meetings.

Luckily, news media are caught up with law and order. By design or not, it's all well for this cute administration. It is closer than ever to breaking the man named Band . . . Wrist Band . . . for good by putting him in jail. Which, by the way, is air-conditioned.

Whether all that big news takes our mind off the economy, is hard to say. Notice also, though, the downpour of accusation of crimes, all thrown against Wrist Band's alleged henchman, none other than Panfilo Lacson, former PNP chief.

It's yet another big news when, for the sake of law and order, Gloriaetta herself uses the ultimate tool known as "insinuation." This, among lawyers, is the lowest of the low-end means to show a person's guilt. Sometimes, they also try to prove it in court.

* * *

NOW Lacson also happens to be running for senator in the opposition ticket. It's always big news, of course, when the highest official of the land takes a dig at a struggling candidate like Lacson, one who is not even in the front-running.

By coincidence, in a gathering of people with short names, for whom her former spokesman Renato Corona earlier did a big favor by insulting them in public, Gloriaetta accused an unknown somebody of certain unqualified bad things. Clear enough?

In a press briefing later on, she went frontal against Lacson by claiming that his elite police group, the PAOCTF, only staged the rescues of kidnap victims. In short, it's all drama. You mean, boss, all those actors playing criminals were killed by accident?

In this lifetime, I want to see Lacson go directly to jail, without any stopover, because of all the bad things he is said to have done. I mean, really, how can we let such an evil man get away with being punished by bad publicity alone? By golly, jail him!

* * *

IN the recent Senate hearing on the Dacer case, no wonder, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon talked a lot about procedures. When do the police, for instance, talk to media regarding a crime? Before, during, or after the actual investigation? That is, assuming there's a real crime.

Biazon noted that many things were already said in public about the case. They all happened to point to either Wrist Band or Lacson. They came out in media before the Three Stooges who handled the case could build an actual case against those two. Why?

Almost all the dailies, for instance, published the statements of two of the Three Stooges, saying that the "mastermind" in the Dacer case might also be the mastermind in the Kuratong Baleleng case—in big bold headlines, at that!

Assuming that the senators are in the lowest pile of the low order of morons, one of the Three Stooges tried to get away by saying that they never mentioned any name. Fine! So they assumed the senators were stupid. Who else could they have meant? Duh!

* * *

SEN. Juan Flavier was even more straight-forward than Biazon. He asked the NBI if it could categorically say, meaning, no more assumption of moronic senators, whether or not the NBI had any evidence to point at Lacson as the mastermind.

Sorry, boss, no dice! You see, er, well, the bureau was still conducting the investigation. Whaaat? Let me see if this is not a hundred percent moronic—you mean, while the investigation was not yet done, the case was solved and presented to media?

Usually, the police try to look at all the angles—"leads," in the language in police stories on television. Surely the NBI must have already looked at the angle connecting the Dacer case to the Kuratong Baleleng case. Still it had no evidence.

What's hard to explain is the complete silence of the NBI about another angle. And that was, the claim of a priest, as reported by a bishop, that a former general told the Dacer family that, in effect, he had contact with the kidnappers. Maybe they just forgot!

* * *

LIKE it or not, the Lacson campaign camp was right in trying to turn the publicity around. They are now saying that it's all part of the "demolition job" against their candidate. It's not impossible for some people to believe them.

For such is always the risk in a publicity war. Some people are bound to believe either side. Win some, lose some! And in all those cases against Lacson, if the Three Stooges fail to file a single one in court, this whole thing boils down to publicity war.

Don't look now, but the Lacson camp will try to take advantage of what they call "persecution." They already have an explanation why this cute administration must concentrate on their candidate. Look, he is a viable winnable contender for 2004.

Word goes around that, when Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile held a fund-raising dinner, at P10,000 per plate, he raised about P5 million. When Lacson did the same, he raised an amazing P20 million. It seems to me this man is a threat to this cute administration.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, April 25, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	10,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	74.5	79	74.5	77.5	1,570,800
China Banking Corp.	600	600	600	600	9,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	43	41.5	42	47,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	215	219	214	219	60,900
Philippine National Bank	43	44	43	44	8,600
Security Bank Corp.	19	19.25	19	19.25	15,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	5,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	220	220	220	220	50
Manulife Financial Corp.	1250	1255	1250	1255	5,110
Sun Life Financial Serv.	970	970	970	970	900
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39	39	39	39	6,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.44	550,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	660	695	660	695	1,030
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	50,000
Piltel	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.51	70,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	685	695	685	695	28,080
Ivantage Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	120,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.045	0.046	0.043	0.046	145,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	42.5	43	41.5	42	32,700
Manila Electric Co. B	54.5	56.5	54.5	56	815,400
Petron Corporation	1.86	1.88	1.86	1.88	1,255,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.36	1.38	1.34	1.38	3,378,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	30,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	5,000
Union Cement Corp.	1	1	1	1	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.25	13.75	907,700
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	30	30	29.5	30	405,500
Pancake House Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	30,000
RFM Corp.	0.85	0.93	0.85	0.93	680,000
San Miguel Corp. A	45.5	46	45.5	46	66,700
San Miguel Corp. B	51.5	52	51.5	52	78,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	2,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.47	0.47	250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	170,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Ayala Corp.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	1,678,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.18	1.24	1.16	1.24	3,902,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.56	1.62	1.56	1.56	17,709,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	180,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.51	0.65	0.51	0.65	30,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.1	1.04	1.08	808,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	23.5	24	23.5	23.75	105,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	300,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,300,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.78	0.8	6,660,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	1,120,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.47	0.5	0.47	0.47	350,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	1,830,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,280,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	10,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	1,000
Music Corp.	2.5	2.55	2.5	2.5	157,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.095	0.1	0.095	0.1	900,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	169,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.46	0.48	3,180,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.48	0.52	700,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.46	0.5	0.46	0.5	520,000
Manila Jockey Club	20	20	20	20	5,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.21	1,320,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38.5	39	38.5	38.5	489,900
Equitable Pci Bank-War	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	648,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	680	680	680	680	50
Jollibee Warrants	13	13.25	13	13.25	95,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.9	3,760,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	300,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.27	3,160,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	5,110,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.08	2.18	2.08	2.16	3,663,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	20,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.9	7.2	6.9	7.1	7,200,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	200,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	6,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	5,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	1,930,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	3,380,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	6,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0042	0.0044	0.0042	0.0044	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	8,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	90,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	200,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000

Economic team expects lower budget gap of ₱132B for 2001

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE ECONOMIC team comprising the Development Budget Coordinating Council is looking at a lower budget deficit of P132 billion this year from an original target of P145 billion following an encouraging P10-billion leeway in the first quarter.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, a member of DBCC, said an emerging lower deficit of P132 billion had been presented and discussed by the economic team.

He stressed, however, that the numbers were still preliminary and have not been adopted as a new target. Last year, the budget deficit swelled to P136.1 billion.

"Since we posted a deficit which is lower by P10 billion compared to the target during the first quarter, there is an emerging consensus that we could hit P132 billion in deficit instead of P145 billion," the finance chief said.

In the first quarter, the Macapagal administration registered a budget deficit of P38.913 billion. This was 25 percent lower than the target of P48.552 billion for the period.

ROMULO

However, the first quarter budget gap was 70 percent more than the P21.686-billion deficit in the same period last year.

Romulo said he would prefer to stick to the P145-billion target, which is equivalent to 3.8 percent of gross domestic product. "I would like to remain cautious and conservative," he said.

The finance chief said the government was bent on containing the deficit this year within the target of P145 billion although a worst-case scenario of P225 billion had surfaced earlier.

He said the government has to achieve its deficit target to help restore investor confidence in the Philippines.

The International Monetary Fund as well as Moody's Investors Service, however, believed the new administration would still not meet the deficit target.

Next year, the deficit is projected to decline to P125 billion or about 2.8 percent of GDP from about 3.8 percent of GDP this year.

In the first quarter, total revenue hit P117.246 billion or P8.738 billion less than the target.

The shortfall in earning was offset by an P18.377 billion savings in expenditures of P156.159 billion versus a programmed spending of P174.536 billion in the first quarter.

Of total earnings in the first three months of the year, the Bureau of Internal Revenue accounted for P84.434 billion, which was short by P8.95 billion from the target.

The Bureau of Customs also missed its target revenue for the first quarter by P2.56 billion and collected only P19.884 billion.

On the other hand, the Bureau of Treasury earned P2.491 billion more than its target of P4.108 billion while earnings from fees reached P7.329 billion or P285 million more than the target.

Divestment of assets earned P135 million for the government as of end-March.

On the spending side, interest payments reached P44.194 billion or P670 million less than what was provided for in the first quarter as rates on government borrowings went down in the first three months of the year.

Cuts in spending led to a P17.707 billion savings in the first quarter as the government spent only P111.965 billion for salaries and other expenses that could not be deferred.

CURRENCIES

April 25, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.117443	1.000000	50.4370
Japan	Yen	0.009151	0.008189	0.4130
United Kingdom	Pound	1.603866	1.435300	72.3922
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.143290	0.128230	6.4675
Switzerland	Franc	0.652560	0.583976	29.4540
Canada	Dollar	0.722890	0.646914	32.6284
Singapore	Dollar	0.616452	0.551663	27.8242
Australia	Dollar	0.563085	0.503905	25.4155
Bahrain	Dinar	2.964198	2.652661	133.7923
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.297977	0.266660	13.4495
Brunei	Dollar	0.616657	0.551846	27.8335
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000085	0.0043
Thailand	Baht	0.024559	0.021978	1.1085
UAE	Dirham	0.304273	0.272294	13.7337
Korea	Won	0.000856	0.000766	0.0386
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.894900	45.1361
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.457555	23.0777
France	Franc	0.152450	0.136427	6.8810
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.406088	20.4819
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.065035	3.2802
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022184	1.1189
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000462	0.0233
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.150511	7.5913
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004464	0.2252
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005378	0.2713
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022184	1.1189
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.136289	57.3110

Robinsons Land earmarks ₱5B for 2001 capex

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

PUBLICLY listed Robinsons Land Corp., the property arm of the Gokongwei family, will spend P5 billion this year in capital expenditures largely to finance the construction of six malls nationwide and three high-rise condominium projects in Metro Manila, RLC president James Go said.

In a briefing with reporters during the launching of its 33-story luxury hotel and high-end residential condominium project Galleria Regency in Ortigas, Go said the company was allocating a higher capital expenditures budget this year compared to P2 billion last year.

"We are more optimistic about the future," he explained.

About 20 percent of this year's P5-billion capex would go to low- to medium-cost housing projects. RLC is currently developing two low-cost housing projects in Cavite, one in Davao and a medium-cost housing program behind its Novaliches mall project.

Go said that RLC would begin this year development of a mall in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and in Lipa, Batangas. Aside from these and the Novaliches mall, the company is now undertaking completion of malls along Marcos Highway, in San Fernando, Pampanga, and in Iloilo.

Go also disclosed plans for the company to increase the branches of its 24-hour convenience store chain, Mini-Stop, to 30 this year from three at present.

Moreover, in the next three years RLC will establish 10 of its warehouse-supermarkets, Big R, across the country.

COPPER, GOLD

Surigao drilling lifts Philex

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

SHARES of mining firm Philex Mining Corp. yesterday surged by 18 percent on news of favorable copper-gold drilling results on the Surigao property of its Canada-based subsidiary.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the company announced that its 81.8 percent owned subsidiary, Philex Gold Inc., had found positive results from mineral claims under its joint venture with Anglo-American Exploration (Philippines) Inc.

Philex was the second biggest gainer at the PSE yesterday, closing at 19.5 centavos or three centavos higher than Tuesday's closing.

"We are very pleased to see the high grade mineralization found. Most of the drill holes to date have intercepted good grade mineralization and in a number of instances we have seen exceptional grades," said Philex Gold chair and CEO Gerard Brimo.

"Three diamond drills are being used on the property, with the third rig having been added in March. We expect that about 10,000 meters of drilling will be completed this year which will more accurately define the lateral and vertical extent of the Boyongan deposit," he said.

The results were reported by Anglo American Exploration, which is responsible for conducting exploration on the Surigao properties under the terms of the joint venture.

Listed in 1956, Philex Mining is one of the biggest and most diversified mining companies in the country. It was incorporated in 1955.

The company has been operating one of the biggest copper mines in the Philippines for the past 40 years. It diversified into gold mining in 1996 and spun off these operations into Philex Gold, which is listed on the Canadian Venture Exchange.

DISCLOSURES

SOLID Group Inc. purchased 4.85 million of its own shares at P0.43 per share.

* * *

MATSUSHITA Electric Philippines Corp. declared a P0.30 per share cash dividend in favor of stockholders as of May 18 and shall be payable starting on June 22.

* * *

THE **PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange** announced that **Waterfront Philippines Inc.** warrants will expire on May 2 and will be delisted and no longer be tradable starting May 3.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Philtrust Bank** were Emilio Yap, Justice Emilio Gancayco, Jaime Laya, Antonio Ozaeta, Jaime Sumulong, Eusebio Go, Ernesto Chan, Basilio Yap, Conrado Janairo, Francisco Gochioco and Ricardo Verzosa. ***Compiled by Maricar Tolosa, PDI Research***

Gov't . . .

(From page B1)

Valencia, former president of the SSS; banker Octavio V. Espiritu, who used to head Far East Bank; former Presidential Security Group head Gen. Leo Alvez; former Court of Appeals Justice Hector Hofillena, and Bacolod businessman Francis Fuentebella.

Meantime, Cojuangco has projected a 20-percent growth in revenues for the food and beverage giant over the next two years.

Aside from the higher sales and broader market share from SMC's acquisitions under his leadership, Cojuangco said the group would expand into new ventures such as flour mill and other food-related businesses.

In a statement yesterday, Cojuangco said the company would definitely reap the benefits of the group's recent strategic acquisitions.

Among the acquisitions completed by the SMC group were those of Metro Bottled Water Corp., Sugarland Multi-Foods Inc., Australian premium brewer J Boah & Son, and Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. In addition, SMC is now in the process of finalizing the purchase of Pure Foods Corp., the food unit of the Ayala group.

"We are also looking at new fields to be developed through these acquisitions. With Pure Foods, we can look at new areas in the food group. We've never been in the flour business, for instance, and Pure Foods has a flour mill. This will allow us to go into new products like, say, noodles and such foods," Cojuangco said.

"Our acquisition of Metro Bottled Water Corp. has benefited La Tondeña. Our purchase of J Boag & Son has contributed significantly to the bottom line of SMC as well. And it has opened up Australia to the SMC beer brand," he said.

Cojuangco also said SMC would continue to be on the lookout for other acquisitions that could provide opportunities to further expand its revenue stream.

"We will look at companies that have synergies with food, soft drinks, liquor, beer and whatever we have right now which would strengthen our position and consolidate things for us," he said.

In 2000, SMC posted a recurring net income of P7.5 billion from P6 billion the previous year on the back of P88.7 billion in sales. *With a report from Doris Dumlao*

₱0.24/liter hike in oil prices seen next month

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Conception warned yesterday of another increase in fuel prices next month.

Concepcion said the price hike would amount to between 20 and 24 centavos a liter.

He said that using the Department of Energy's formula, the projected price increase should be in the range of 46 to 50 centavos a liter.

He said, however, that since oil companies deferred a 26-centavos-per-liter rollback last month, the increase in May would be in the 20- to 24-centavo range.

Concepcion said the May price hike was due to the projected average increase of Dubai crude by 60 US cents from March to April.

World Dubai prices averaged $23.45 a barrel in March compared to $24.10 a barrel in April.

The peso depreciated by an average of 1.63 to the dollar from 48.52 last month to 50.15 this month.

Industry leader Petron Corp. said the company was continuing to review the movements of the bellwether Dubai crude and the peso's value against the dollar.

On the other hand, Petron corporate communications manager Virginia Ruivivar said based on the current rates of (average crude prices and the peso-dollar exchange), "an (increase) of 48 centavos per liter should be reflected."

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. chair Oscar Reyes said it was too early to say whether there would indeed be an oil price increase.

"We have to check for ourselves what the final movement of crude (prices) and the foreign exchange rate for April would be'" Reyes said.

Court junks gov't bid to use Maynilad performance bond

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COURT of Appeals has junked the government's bid to use a $200-million performance bond to cover debts that Maynilad Water Services Inc. has refused to pay.

Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System administrator Jose Mabanta yesterday told the INQUIRER that the appellate court denied the MWSS' petition to lift an order that prevented it from touching Maynilad's performance bond.

Mabanta said the court's ruling meant the national government would have to pay some P2.651 billion in obligations that Maynilad had refused to pay.

Citing "force majeur," Maynilad refused to pay concession fees to the MWSS because of huge losses it had been incurring since the peso fell steeply against the US dollar.

Maynilad absorbed nearly all of the $800 million that the MWSS owed when it won a contract in 1997 to provide water services to the MWSS' eastern concession zone, which covered Manila, Pasay, Las Piñas, Malabon, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Parañaque, Bacoor, Kawit, Imus, Cavite City, Noveleta, Rosario and parts of Taguig and Quezon City.

At the time, the peso was trading strongly at 26 to a dollar. The local currency, however, fell sharply as a result of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis, hitting as low as 56 to a dollar. The peso's depreciation virtually doubled Maynilad's debt servicing expenses from P20 billion to P40 billion.

The company said it also suffered losses because of natural and man-made causes, the El Niño, a delay in the completion of the Umiray water project and the 300-million liter per day bulk water project, and Maynilad's discovery that its pipe network was not only 2,500 kilometers long as MWSS had warranted but 4,000 kilometers.

Some analysts familiar with the issue said, however, the tight fix and financial woes now being experienced by Maynilad could be due to wrong financial assumptions. They said Maynilad offered rates lower than necessary during the bidding for the concessions.

Former Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla said Maynilad used financial assumptions that were no longer applicable. The former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority said the concessionaires apparently used the most optimistic financial scenario.

DTI says piracy lobby bloating losses

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has charged an influential lobby group of bloating the losses of US software makers, publishers, movie and music producers from bootleggers in the Philippines.

In a letter to US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II raised "serious doubts" about the International Intellectual Property Alliance's claim that losses from software and copyright piracy reached close to $200 million in 1999.

Roxas said the IIPA "narrowly assumed" a one-to-one ratio between computer sales and software sales, and the same ratio between student population and textbook sales that he described as "overly simplistic methodology."

"In a developing country like the Philippines, such one-to-one ratio will remain a utopian situation for some time because many students in the Philippines, if not the majority, simply cannot afford to pay the prescribed textbooks (legitimate or otherwise)," Roxas said.

The trade department is trying to thwart IIPA's lobbying for the USTR to place the Philippines from its ordinary to priority watch list of the world's violators of intellectual property rights.

The USTR is expected to hand down its decision before the end of the month. IIPA is a group of seven trade associations composed of 1,450 US copyright-based companies whose sales have been substantially affected by widespread piracy in the country.

In the USTR's National Trade Estimate for 2001, Roxas said the US government belittled the Philippines' efforts to protect and enforce IPRs and placed the country under the Special 301 watch list.

Portfolio investments continue net outflow

By Clarissa S. Batino

PORTFOLIO investments continued to slip out of the Philippines in the first quarter of the year, indicating that foreign investors' confidence had yet to fully return to the country.

Based on data furnished by four custodian banks to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, substantial outflows in the last two weeks of March led to a net portfolio outflow of $1.7 million in the first three months of the year.

The trend appeared to continue in April, when net outflows of $84.3 million outpaced inflows of $69 million in the first two weeks of the month to a net outflow of $15.3 million.

From January to March, portfolio investments reached $464.7 million while the amount of hot money that tumbled out was at $466.4 million. Curiously, it was in January when the country realized the highest level of inflows worth $213.8 million.

The level of net outflow in the first quarter is measly compared to the same period last year when net outflow stood at $289.4 million based on inflows of $968.1 million and net outflows of $1.307 billion.

NTC to give up collections

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission is set to give up at least 80 percent of its total fee collections from phone companies that seek to increase subscription rates for their fixed line phones.

This would help increase the country's telephone density especially in the rural areas, said NTC Commissioner Eliseo Rio Jr.

"We are thinking of easing up on the supervision and regulatory fees," he said.

The 80 percent accounts for the supervision and regulatory fees of the NTC imposed on all phone companies while the 20 percent accounts for all other fees such as fees for processing applications for telecommunications services.

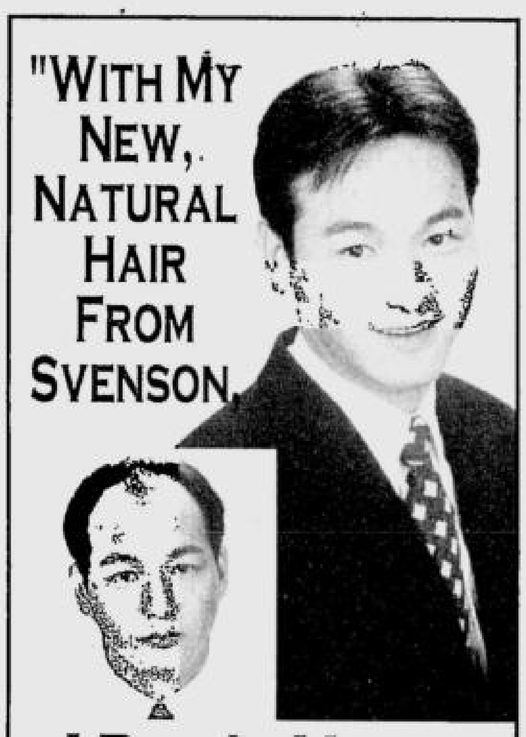
However, Rio said the NTC would have to seek the approval of Malacañang first especially since the government is being burdened by a ballooning budget deficit.

"We have to show them that this is necessary because we will have to do away with a substantial amount," he said.

The NTC is supposed to raise P850 million in collections this year compared to only P800 million last year. Implementing this plan to increase telephone density would therefore make it impossible for the NTC to raise the target amount.

Earlier the NTC decided to be lenient on phone companies that failed to complete their mandated telephone rollout obligations as a result of poor subscriber uptake. Rio said there were too many excess phone lines in the provinces.

"Why should we force them to complete the rollout when there are excess lines? We are also looking into their concerns so we would let them come up with alternatives to completing their rollout," said Rio.



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873-5949 • 874-2175

MAKATI

•DASMA VILL 1679m² 2sty 5BR pool 47k/m² 844-0130

Holiday Inn Eaton Makati Good Income • 928-1469

Magallanes Subd 4BR MQ LA367 FA320 • 643-5313

DASMA-1679m² 5BR 4TB Pool @78m 8440130 Rosie

MANILA

Capt. Ticong - 419m² nr Sch 2sty P12.5M 8440130

L. Guinto 323m² 2Stry 3br Nr Sch @11M 8440130

L.Guinto - 323m² 2sty 3BR 3car grge P11M 8440130

MARIKINA

Good Buy @ 2.2M nice LA240 Rancho Est. III 8253244

Grnlnd bnew 3br 2M 9487112

Ipil St., Marikina Heights 5Brms Pool • T634-1212

PASIG

**Kawilihan Pasig Duplex P7.8M Neg. 671-4421

**Kawilihan Pasig P10M Cor. 3Br Call 671-4421

Greenwoods Pasig Hse & Lot 204LA 225FA 3BR 3TB w/Pool P5M Neg. 6400782 or 0917-9312577

Robinson Circle 460sqm 0917-4149898 • T634-1212

Valle Verde 5 LA420 3BR P18M Only • 723-2391

VVerde 5 LA420 3BR P20M 1100 cor P39M • 723-2391

QUEZON CITY

Acropolis 300-330m² P17-20M 4BR 2Sty 6337601-03

Ayala Heights P15.5M Fixer Upper 671-4421

Samat St w/ 5Stry Bldg 600m² SMH w/Hse 9298376

D. Tuazon St SMH QC 411m² 2Stry 928-1469

Baler St. Q.C. LA=3000m² WHse 18T/m² • 928-1469

BARGAIN TERMS B.RIDGE 6BR CONCRETE HSSE AT NO COST 805M @19T/M 6470671

B'ful 6 Brs Big Garden 2 Yrs Old P15.5M 671-4421

FULLY FURNISHED NR SM NORTH T926-4889

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOUSE & LOT

QUEZON CITY

Loyola Grand Villas 0917-7062620; 435-2346

Mira Nila QC 354FA 5br 5t&b 3stry 150LA 6.9M 9289714/9279609/4532899

LGV 1000m² 4br attic 25M Panoramic View 412-1825

NEW MLA. 0917-7541545

Nr Ateneo FA315 LA268 H²O Ok w/View 12M 6453731

•NR CHERRY • CONG'L• P3.7M Bnew 4BR 4TB Conc w/Guard 4538942•4555094

P. Tuazon QC 1100m² 4BR 3TB 6CG P27.5M 928-2497

Sikatuna Bung LA412 4br FA250 8.5M Nice 6453731

Sta. Mesa Height Lot 90m² 3BR T&B w/Pkg • 928-1469

T. Pura QC 475m² 4BR 4TB 5CG w/Garden • 928-2497

Timog QC 493m² 3BR 3TB 4CG P15.5M • 928-2497

UP Village QC Old House LA400m² 6-8M • 533-5525

Xavierville New Duplex 0917-7541545

RIZAL

Beverly Hills LA1700sqm FA700m² P15M • 655-9393

Dacon Townhomes LA155m² FA90m² 1.8M • 655-9393

Homepoint Subd. LA79sqm FA60m² P950T • 655-9393

Vista Verde 200LA 281FA 4BR 3TB Maids Rm/TB 2cargrge Nice 3.5M RUSH B141619148 C9175351847

SAN JUAN

Greenhills Cor Only P38M 6714421 / 09175279121

Bargain GH H&L Corner 900m² P38M • 671-4421

Ghills N 1000 cor 6B Den Spool P38M M 723-2391

Ghills SEV P20M, 35M, 50M & Up Call 723-2391

PROVINCIAL

Baguio House & Lot Good Location 531-3742

1Hectares Bulacan Rdy 4 Piggery P3.5M 9281469

Tagaytay 249.5M 2Stry B-new Call 928-1469

OTHER AREAS

CanyonWoods Bingas 7.5M ownrlvng neg0917-8143792

•LAGUNA BEL-AIR 3• LA120m² up 2-3BR w/prkg Joann 912-5775

NoDP,2650/mo 09195898014

LOT

ALABANG

AAV Southvale 400-800m² 13,500/14T/m² 874-9074/75

Ayala Southvale 400m² 13,500 gd loc 874-9074/75

LAS PINAS

BF Resort Vill 270m² 5,500 Near Seton 874-9074 / 75

BFR Rush 414 5T 526 5.2 5T 343 5.5ST 169 8726951

BFRV nr Abel Mosce 169m² 6,500/m² • 874-7234

MAKATI

BARGAIN TERMS FT. BONIFACIO 450SQM 23T/M CALL 647-0671

MANILA

A. Mabini VAC LOT 488m² @P50K/m² 8440130 Rosie

A.Mabini - Vac. Lot. 488m² @50K/m² nice 8440130

Vito Cruz 909m² @ 50K/m² VL nr Stadium 8440130

MANDALUYONG

Lot w/Old 2Sty LA:264m² Nr EDSA 3.5M only 5312021

Wack Wack 1100m² Near Manuela P40T/m² 671-4421

WACKWACK Townhomes 2BR 93sqm 3M only 5312021

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

MARIKINA

Marikina East 814m² VAC Mor Sun 16K/m² 8440130

MUNTINLUPA

Hillsborough Area 450sqm P4M 655-4556 • 655-9393

Hilsboro 400-800 8,500/m² Good Loc. • 874-9074 / 75

PARANAQUE

Tahanan-Vac Lot 280sqm @12K/sqm • 844-0130

Maywood 288m² VAC LOT @7500/m² 8440130

•MAYWOOD 288m² VL P7500/m² 888-5007

V/L Multi-Natl 2Lots 615ea Main Rd Cheap 6435313

PASIG

Bo Kapitolyo 245m² 722-8951

Greenwoods 136m² 722-8951

Lot 6971sq.m. & warehouse at Pasig w/ wharf provision CALL: 897-5272 (Zenaida)

QUEZON CITY

**Only P1.3M Leland Dr. Novaliches 671-4421

**Neopolitan Ph6 P4500/m² 300m² w/Fence 671-4421

2.5Has Resdl Lot Ideal Twnhse Devt QC 937-1536

4.5Has Resdl VL Cheap Diliman QC • 937-1536

Del Monte Ave. QC 1600m² V-Lot • 928-1469

L317 Marcos Hiway Comml Vacant Lot • 928-1469

Leland Dr near Eternal Gardens P1 3M • 671-4421

North View QC 180m² P5T/m² • 928-2497

Nr New York 400m² 20T Neg No Flood 6453731

QC 15th Ave 500m² 25T Neg Facing East 6453731

SFDM QC 519sqm w/Imp. 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Sta. Mesa Hts 0917-7541545

Tandang Sora 755m² • Call Tel # 634-8160

Tandang Sora QC L-1640m² P16T/m² • 928-1469

Xavier Ville LA=280sqm P25T/sqm • 928-2497

Xavier Ville LA=457sqm P25T/sqm • 928-2497

RIZAL

300m² Palos Verdes Antipolo Very Cheap • 937-1536

Agnesville 300m² 722-8951

Antipolo V/L w/fruit trees 5300m² w/old Hse 6435313

Imelda Ave 464sqm Comm'l 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Kingsville Hills Area 120sqm P3T/sqm 655-9393, 655-4556

Lot 540m² Felix Ave Dir BuyerTessParayno 7155469

Montevista Hgts. Area: 140sqm P4,000/sqm 655-9393

Montevista Hts Area: 179sqm 3,900/m² 655-9393 • 655-4556

San Martin Subd. Area: 240m² 2,500/m² 655-9393 • 655-4556

Taytay 1H Tikling 3.3/2 Nice Flat w'Road 6453731

Taytay 1Ha. Comm'l Nat'l Rd 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Village East Area 387sqm 4,500/m² 655-9393, 655-4556

Village East Binangonan 203m² cor. 5313742

With Old House Area 426sqm P3M • 655-9393 / 655-4556

SAN JUAN

Ghills North 750-960m² 723-2391; 0917-3848111

Little Baguio 300-500m² 723-2391; 0917-3848111

San Juan Lit Baguio 450m² Good 4 Wrhse 723-2391

San Juan Little Baguio LA=300 & up • 723-2391

PROVINCIAL

**Pampanga 27H Alng Mc Arthur H-way 220/m² 681-2457

Baguio Subd. LOT w/Pine Trees Tel. 5313742

Cityland, Paliparan Farmlots 791m² 668m² (adjoining) 6559393

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

PROVINCIAL

Colbella Homes Tanauan Batangas 3Lots 5313742

Fort Magsaysay 18Has Resd'l P450m² 5313742

Grand Victoria N. Ecija 4 Lots 5313742

Malinta Bul 7049m² VLot Along Hi-way • 928-1469

RUSH: Tagaytay Lot 2510sqm overlooking Taal Lk. along Natl Rd beside Golf Club. Contact Yolly Cupat Tel#09198103219 or email REINER@GUOMAI.SH.CN or Fax 008621-62619187 or Alberto Nagrama 6410017

Sherwood Cavite 345m² B11 L3 Call 723-2391

Tagagytay 2Adj Lots 780 & 805sqm • 723-2391

Tagaytay 2Adj Lots 780 805m² Call 723-2391

Tagaytay Country Homes I 135m² 3,200/m² 9283267

TAGAYTAY PROPERTIES House & Lots • 681-2457

Tagaytay Royale w/Share 447m² Cor Lot 6337601-03

Tagaytay w/View 5802sqm P2000/sqm • 633-7601-03

Villa Segovia Sta Rosa 2 corner LOTS 5313742

Ideal 4 Food Chain, Hotel, etc. Palawan 09173711210

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

KALOOCAN

Bnew 50m² 2br 1tb w/grge Nr. Malinta Exit 250T 5 5T Mo. /Amrt Text 09178349005 R-nel

MAKATI

**Rockwell 3 Units 2Brs Fast Selling 671-4421

3 Salcedo 3Br 9155177

Colonade Legaspi Village 3BR 3TB 9.5M 915-5177

Fort Boni The New City 3BR Only P8.2M • 671-4421

Makati 2-3BR P3.8M Cash/Terms Call 533-5525

Medical Plaza Mkti 30sqm 2.2M. 48m² 3 3M Pkg 8150298

MANILA

3BRnrDLSlle Taft 8992148

MANDALUYONG

Wack' Twin 2br FA145 Fcing Glf Crse Call 723-2391

PARANAQUE

Paranaque City LA68m² 3BRs P3M • 533-5525

PASAY

Roxas Blvd w/Bay View 123BR Terms Call 928-2369

PASIG

**Renaissance Ortigas 1-3Br Rush Sale 6812457

•TEKTITE 111M² 4.9M Rush 110m²@280/m² 412-1825

Emerald Mansion 3BR 6M w/ 1Carpk Call 412-1825

Office Condo Ortigas 38Th /m² Cell 09174149898

PARAGON PLAZA EDSA Res. Studio • T634-1212

Renaissance 3000 2Bdrms 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Renaissance 3000 New 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

Renaissance Tower 237m² 3br 8.5Mneg 8150298/5341271

Renaissance Tower Meralco Ave. Call 634-8160

Sam Miguel Ave. 86.17m² 1Pkrg • T634-1212

TEKTITE EAST 220 sqm 2Parking • T634-1212

QUEZON CITY

Cubao Condo 1.3M EZTerm 9126976 9132224 4381480

PARC CHATEAU PENTHSE 226sqm 1ps • 6337601-03

Blue Ridge 4 3BR 3TB MR w/TB 2CG 6.5M • 928-2497

**Blueridge Like Bnew 250m² 3Br 2Cg 671-4421

El Jardin Bohol Ave QC 2 Studios 1Cg Call 915-5177

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

QUEZON CITY

Kamias 3Dr 12M 9155177

Nr Ateneo LA72 FA149 3br 2tb Nr Nice 6453731

PANAY 3BR P5M 722-8951

Scout Area 3BR 3TB 2CG MR w/TB 5.5M • 928-2497

Scout Thses 4-7M Nice 3Stry 9283267 9283267

Narra Hts1 3BR 2TB 1CG 125m² 915-5177 641-9346

SAN JUAN

Annapolis Greenhills 2-3 BR 7-8M 9283267

Condo 3BR 137 P4M Call 723-2391

Ghills 3br P5.5M w/ Huge Blcny Call 723-2391

Ghills Anapolis FA130 Ofc / Res 2Br P3.8M 723-2391

Ghills Anapolis Condo 3br P9-11M 723-2391

G'hills Condo 3BR P5.5M Fur/Unfur • 723-2391

Ghills Ofc Condo 70m² w/Prkng FFur P32M 723-2391

Greenhills Condo 1BR FA 70 P3M 723-2391

Greenhills Eisenhower St., 3br P6-8M Call 723-2391

Greenhills Ofc 70²m w/Prkng P31M 723-2391

Nr G'Hills LA67 FA200 3br 7M 2Cg Nice 6453731

One Beverly Place 7.2M 3br mq pkg 157m² 6435313

San Juan Thse FA289 3br Attic P11.5M 723-2391

PROVINCIAL

Europa Condo FA171sqm Price P4M • 655-9393

OTHER AREAS

Condotel Facing L. Taal P1.1M Praise 7532532/33

CASIMIRO TOWNHOMES
Habay, Bacoor, Cavite
near SM Bacoor
Initial DP: P15,000

WESTVILLE HOMES
Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite
Initial DP: P15,000
FORTE REALTY
2/F Princess Bldg, Esteban St,
Legaspi Village, Makati City
810-7183 810-8019
815-2144 829-5081
810-7297 872-7603
871-8318
Welcome Brokers & Agents

VARIOUS AREAS

Makati/Ortigas 300-1500m² Ready to Use • 533-5525

MEMORIAL LOT

**Heritage Park Now Open Lawn Estates 671-4421

RESORT

**BF Resort Vill Las Pinas 276m² @ 5500 8749075

CLUB SHARE & MEMBERSHIP

Fantcsy World M. Share Praise Realty 7532532/33

Fontana Share 200T 9283267 / 141210187

FACTORY/WHSE

San Juan 1573m²whse off@ 23K/m² 8440130

**Ugong Bul Whse L3774 Tel 9281469 / 4534877

FARM/FISHPEN

21Has Mango Orchard & Resort Bataan • 937-1536

Rawland Montalban 722-8951

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

MANILA

3 BR NAGTAHAN T715-1687

3BRnrDLSlle Taft 8992148

HOUSE

MAKATI

Sanlo Maglines Belair Ecovil 1BR 5BR Mel Call 815-0298

SANLO 3BR 5268048/49

MARIKINA

3BRnr sch church mkt9411342

QUEZON CITY

10B Malumanay St. Sikatuna Vill. 2BR&TB 15T/mo Alan 8184277

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Crown Tower Condo, Salcedo Vill 2BR 163sqm FF w/Pkg, Mds Rm. P60T/mo. 896-6665

CTL8 1BR P Fur P10T 9299835

IT Bldg Fort Boni Enjoy D Benefits P350/m² 671-4421

Mkt Asia Tower 1-2-3Br 7518342 6337601-03

Mkti Legaspi Salcedo 250m² GF Ortigas Mel Call 815-0298

CB RICHARD ELLIS
Managed Res Units
Dela Costa Makati
123 BR/FF 43-157m²
25-85K ★7522580/8487388
09178381928 ★09178112635
manila@cbre.com

MANILA

Burgundy Westbay
VCruz-Taft nr LaSalle
B'New Std/123 BR 11-37K
Coml/Ofc Units 42-90m²
752-2580 • 848-7388
0917-8381928 • 09178112635
manila@cbre.com

MANDALUYONG

Cityland Shaw Studio Furn 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

PIONEER 1BR • 722-8951

PASIG

Rushl Rent -/ Sale Ortigas Renaissance 09178143792

Valle Verde 3BR FA=250 P35-38T • 723-2391

Valle Verde 6 2BR P19T 723-2391 • 0917-3848111

VVerde 6 3Brs w/Attic P35T/mo 6337601-03

SAN JUAN

Eisenhower Comm'l Unit 83.80m² 5313742

VARIOUS AREAS

Makati/Ortigas 2-3BRs 122-300m² 25T-85T 533-5525

FOR LEASE

1-3 Hec P50-70/m² With Bldg Cell 0917-4149898

Ind'l Lot Ideal 4 Mall 3Has Libis 4 Lease • T634-1212

BUSINESS RENTAL

Antel Global Ortigas 80 150 up 300/m² 4121825

**Antel Global 142m² 350/m² Call 6812457

Com'l Space 4 Rent
Alng Mindnao Ave cor TSora Ave nr Sch Church & best 4 B-saloon, cafe bar, office & others 9396971/ 72

Coml/Res@ B.G. Belmonte St nr E Rodriguez QC 721-6386

**JMT BLdg 318m² at 280/m² Call 6812457

P1,800/mo Stalls
Malate T-400-6420/23
Sn.Pedro Lag. 808-6006/07

**Taipan Ortigas 129m² Call 681-2457

**Tektite 101m² Up at 300/m² Call 6812457

70m² Roosevelt Ave. 2C 438-3970; 0917-7914379

Ayala Life FEU Center F282m² 2Pkg Lot 928-1469

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

BUSINESS RENTAL

Cnta30m²Clnic/Shp6552773

Makati Office Space 195m² 500/m² • 533-5525

Ortigas Ctr 100/200/400sqm 815-0298 CP 0919-4037225

MALATE G/F 5268048/49

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HYUNDAI

'98 GRACE P250T 731-3492

'98 GRACE P265T 731-3492

'99 H100 345T 7313492

KIA

'98 PREGIO P330T 7313492

MERCEDES

'85Benz 580T 09198194190

'98 MB100D P395 7313492

MB 126 Body See 2 apprcte • 634-8160

MITSUBISHI

97 LANCER EL 28,000Km P250T Call 0918-9039146

97Lncr GLXi 263T Neg8382015

Space Wagon Acq.'93 Call Tel # 634-8160

VAN/PICK-UP

URGENT SALE VAN FROM KOREA 94 MODEL P220T BESTA 92 MODEL GRACE P180T T7317911

BUSES/TRUCKS

Japan: ELF Canter M/Dump Garry Porter Bongo T-Ace PAS /Wing/AL-Van P-VIP 4WD Chiller 4-6-10W 912-0647

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

Bnew L300 8261045 8254058

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

CARS•VANS•8955627•8957247 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8969956

FXcheapprov.rates3730584

IT/ Hiace 9136710/4333682

MB 100 Van 641-1859

New HiAce 6336754/9100893

SELFDRIVE-New Cars & Vans. Daily or Long Term ABC-5368822/3039789

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

UDrive Carsvans 8006595

Car Vans 4535288/9296250

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS LENDING 8990215

We Buy Cars Cash 6718191

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523-24

2% w/o taking car 7262780

2% w/o Taking Car 3670169

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

ELECTRONIC & INDUSTRIAL EQUIP

Security Svs. 714-4361

SPORTING GOODS

Billiard 23T 25T & 30T New Accept C.Card • 781-9453

B.Table B'New/Accessories (02)801-4494/802-0566

Imported billiard 22T, 35T complete acc's. 8618714 to 16 / 8613123 / 8613125

STRIKEMASTER Bowling & Billiards Sales & Rentals T-9341569

TOYS

ADULT TOYS Imptd. 6578275/09173698873

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

B/SELL FUL PD EDUC PLAN 7137284•09177939632

BUYING ROLEX others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair ROLEX Tel# 804-0484 • 834-2886

Buy/Pawn Diamonds T8342886

MISCELLANEOUS

Computer P15T 435-2335

Brand New Nokia 6210 P12,000 Call 820-5702

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Hiring!!! Male Nurse 20-25 yrs. old Can Drive 723-3724

WANTED Result oriented individual with at least 10 yrs. work experience in Building/Property Management to the position of Building Manager. Application must be submitted to Roxas Land Corporation, Tower One, Ayala Ave., Makati City Tel# 841-56-09

FEMALE

Cook 4 Foreigner 726-1266

Cook; All Around- Maid= 4 Persons; SS-4T 2600 Legarda, Sampaloc, Manila

MAIDS DIRECT HIRE 7284971

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T5280722

Ofc. staff 9134470 Nell

Ofc Staff 9134470 Ms Dang

. Ofc.Staff 9134470-Nicol

Wtd. H/Maids Yaya/Fam. Cook/Fam Driver 660-4589

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Real Estate Seminar Licensure Start May 4 REBAP QC Call 743-9094

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

CAP Educ.250th 09174924408

JUICE DRINK MAKING BUSS. FREE DEMO 2553584/2537617

Looking for distributors of highly unique consumable products. First time in the Philippines. For inquiries, please email Jackloy@info.com.ph

RTW Cash/Consign 373-8821

T-SHIRT SALE TEL4383147

PERSONAL

"FORTY DAYS"
In Honor of the Glorious Apostle, St. Jude. *Pray the Act of Contrition and the number of Our Fathers corresponding to the day.*
PRAYER FOR EVERYDAY
Most blessed Apostle, Saint Jude, so dear to Jesus, Who gave you the power to work miracles for the benefit of mankind; offer my prayers to the Giver of all good and if it be His will, help me to obtain from His Kindness and mercy what I am asking through thy powerful intercession. Amen.

NOVENA PRAYER TO ST. JUDE O, HOLY ST. JUDE apostle and martyr, great in virtue, rich in miracles,near in kinsman to Jesus Christ,faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present, urgent petition (make your request). In return, I promise to make known and cause you to be invoked. Say three Our Father, three Hail Mary and the Glory be. St.Jude, pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Humbly in need of your intercession. Amen--ABV

Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Professional Regulation Commission invites interested SUPPLIERS to submit sealed bids for the printing and supply of materials for the following items:

ITEMS	PRE-BID CONFERENCE
Optical Mark Reader Forms 1. Application for Admission 2. Identification/Answer Sheets	May 10, 2001

Pre-bid conference will be held at the PRC Conference Room. Failure to attend will be a ground for the disqualification to participate in the bidding.

Pre-qualification requirements and bidding documents are available at the Office of the Chairman, BAC, OFAS, 2nd Floor, Annex Building on **May 8, 2001**. Pre-qualification documents shall be submitted not later than **May 16, 2001.**

Submission and opening of bids shall be as follows:

ITEMS	SUBMISSION Technical & Financial Statement)	OPENING	
		TECHNICAL	FINANCIAL
OMR Application for Admission and ID/Answer Sheets	May 17, 2001	May 17, 2001 10:00 AM	May 27, 2001 10:00 AM

The two (2) envelop system shall be adopted in the bidding.

All bid proposals must be accompanied by a bidder's bond equivalent to 2.5% of the total offer in the form of Manager's Check or GSIS Bond.

The Professional Regulation Commission reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Commission.

(Sgd.) **DIR. TEOFILO GAIUS M. SISON, JR.**
Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – Apr. 26 & 27, 2001)

BUYING TRIMMING PAPER

ULTRA INTERNATIONAL TRADING COMPANY needs hundred tons of scrap paper with the following condition:

1. From industrial, factory or junk shop that can supply regularly and willing to supply on a long term contract.
2. Materials must be pure white in color and without printing.
3. Clean without plastic lamination and foreign materials.
4. Bare or unbare accepted.
5. Delivery within Metro Manila not less than 3 tons/delivery.

Interested parties may call from 10am to 6pm at 631-3047 or 6372727

The FAST STEP towards finding the best JOBS.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

In compliance with POEA Rules & Regulations, we wish to inform the public that Mr. RENANTE D. MORALES has ceased to be connected with **ARPAPHIL SHIPPING CORPORATION** as from 17 April 2001.

THE MANAGEMENT

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID FOR SURVEYORSHIP

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be holding a pre-bidding and bidding conference among accredited surveyors on **May 07, 2001** and **May 09, 2001**, respectively at 2:00 PM at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez, Sr. Ave., Quezon City for the disport surveyorship of the following commodities:

LOT	COMMODITY	QTY.(IN MT)	DISPORT	DELIVERY SCHEDULE/ETA
A	US WHITE CORN	30,000, 10% MOLSO	CEBU	MAY 30
B	RICE	125,000, 10% MOLSO	MANILA	WITHIN MAY/JUNE/JULY

Only qualified surveyors and/or their authorized representatives shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Issuance of pre-qualification requirements shall be available from **April 26-30, 2001** (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) at Foreign Operations Division - Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Avenue, Q.C. Interested new applicants for accreditation shall have until **May 03, 2001** (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) to submit requirements for accreditation. Further, NFA accredited surveyors must update existing records as maybe deemed necessary not later than 1700 HRS, **May 03, 2001** to qualify in said bidding. Results of accreditation will be announced during the pre-bidding proper.

Sealed offers must be submitted between 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM on the bidding date accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to 5% of total offer in the form of Cashier's, Manager's check, bank or demand draft in PHP which must be drawn from a reputable bank in Metro Manila. Accredited offerors may submit price quotes either for LOT A and/or LOT B.

The bidding terms and conditions shall be available at the Foreign Operations Division - Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor starting **04 May 2001** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Bid Form will be available on **May 07, 2001** after the pre-bidding conference at Foreign Operations Division - Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Avenue, Q.C. (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP 2,000.00 at the Directorate for Treasury, Budget and Fund Management, Matimyas Bldg., 8th Flr., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.

Opening of bids will start exactly at 2:00 PM of the bidding date.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formalities or defects found therein and may accept bid/s most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **VICENTE V. RACHO**
Assistant Administrator
and Chairman, Bidding Committee

(PDI--April 26, 27 & 28, 2001)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
QUEZON CITY

NOTICE OF ALLOCATION OF 30,000 MT IMPORTED WHITE CORNGRAINS

Based on the Notice to All Interested White Corngrain Millers (Central Visayas-Region 7) published in two (2) daily newspapers last March 31, April 1 and 2, 2001, hereunder are the allocations of imported white corngrains per cornmiller as determined by the National Food Authority (NFA).

PROVINCE	CORNMILLER	REQUESTED VOL. (MT)	ALLOCATED VOL. (MT)
CEBU	GOSOTTO MILLING	200	200
	MACTAN MILLING	1,100	1,100
	CEBU CORN PRODUCTS	1,100	1,100
	CAPITOL MILLING	1,300	1,300
	GOODWILL MILLING	1,100	1,100
	MABUHAY MILLING	1,100	1,100
	EAST VISAYAN MILLING	1,300	1,300
	CEBU FILIPINAS MILLING	1,300	1,300
	VISAYAN CORN MILL CO.	1,300	1,300
	SANDY MILLING	1,100	1,100
	ATLAS CORN MILL	1,300	1,300
	FEDAS TRADERS, INC.	1,100	1,100
	EVERGREEN MILLING	600	600
	GOOD HOPE MILLING	1,100	1,100
NEGROS OR.	LLOYD D. LIMKAICHONG	150	150
	FERNANDO K. SOLON	250	250
	NENITA MARQUITA	150	150
	JOHANSING DY	300	300
	EUFRATES CREDO	450	450
	EXUPERIO C. LLTANAL	50	50
	ROBERTO SY/DURICO	3,000	3,000
	JIMMY D. HO	50	50
	ELORDE BELTRAN	45	45
	TOTAL	19,445	19,445

(Sgd.) **VICENTE V. RACHO**
Asst. Administrator and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI--April 26, 27 & 28, 2001)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
AD NO. PD 2001-22

Rebidding Date: May 4, 2001 - 10:00 AM

PB010319-T2JD5952	AUTOMOTIVE STORAGE BATTERY, 2/3 SMF, Sealed Type, Maintenance Free
PB010326-T3JR5976	WELDING ELECTRODE, AWS 7018, Size: various sizes
PB010419-T3JR6064	CONNECTOR/CONDUIT
PB010419-T3WG6065	TRANSFORMER, 50/60 Hz 2 KW
PB010419-T3WG6066	WIRE, Magnet, size 16 AWG
PB010419-T3WG6067	MULTI MEDIA PROJECTOR
PB010419-T3JR6068	MICROFILM IMAGELINK/DEVELOPER/FIXER
PB010419-T3JR6069	FACSIMILE MACHINE
PB010419-T3JR6070	FLUID, Calibration, Part#B5100/B51003
PB010419-T3JR6071	FUSER ASSEMBLY for HP Laserjet 5L Printer
PB010419-T3JR6072	MATERIALS FOR CLONAL PROPAGATION OF DIPTEROCARP SPECIES (Alcohol, Distilled Water, Seedling Tray, Sodium Hydroxide, etc.)

** Bidding Date: May 16, 2001

2001-22-01	AIR HOSE, 300 psi, Size ¾"
2001-22-02	PLATE, Carbon Steel, Size: 75mm x 1220x2438/SHAFTING BARS, ASTMA291, various sizes
2001-22-03	* CONSTRUCTION HARDWARE SUPPLIES (Paints, Paints Brush, Padlock, Door Lock, Cord, Plug, Lamp, Wire, Faucet, Nail, Sealant, Valve, Ballast, etc.) * To be purchased thru Open-Ended Purchase Order for a period of six months Starting June 2001

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. **Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on May 3, 2001

Bidding documents available on April 27, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). ** Last day of issuance of bidding documents May 11, 2001

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM. For inquiries please call no. 921-25-74.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI – April 26 & 27, 2001)

OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved

DR. ROGELIO C. VENTANILLA, D.M.D.

of Cabanatuan City

Joined our Lord in Alameda, California, U.S.A.
on April 20, 2001 at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife **Flordeliza**; children **Christopher**, **Ryan**, and **Randy**; sisters **Gloria** and **Rosalinda**; only surviving brother **Oscar Jr.**; in-laws and relatives request the pious readers and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Greer Family Mortuary, Alameda, California, U.S.A.

Interment will be on April 28, 2001 at the Mountain View Cemetery, Piedmont Ave., Oakland, California, U.S.A.

LYDIA VELASCO CAMPOS

of Quezon City and Vigan, Ilocos Sur

Peacefully joined her Creator on April 25, 2001
at the age of 74.

Her bereaved husband **Tony R. Campos**; sons and daughters **Pat** and **Rick Tobias**, **Chito** and **Nini Campos**, **Lyn** and **Tito Rosero**, **Chit** and **Rene Almeda**, **Corrie** and **Don Magadia**; and grandchildren **Patty**, **Rosa**, **Rica**, **Ina** and **Patrick**; **Luann** and **Anton**; **Dimples** and **Marchee**; **Charlyn** and **Carmeli**; **Iyel** and **Carlo** other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

"... absent with the body to be present with the Lord"
2 Corinthians 5:8

RAMON B. PASION

of Unisan, Quezon and Pilar Village, Las Piñas

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 23, 2001
at the age of 56.

His loving wife, **Ma. Corazon Pejoro-Pasion**; sons **Ramoncito (Monchit)** and **Jose Ma. (Cholo)**; parents **Luis, Sr.** (†) and **Julia** (†) **de Pasion**; mother-in-law **Paz T. Pejoro**; brothers and sisters **Felicisimo** (†) **Sr.** and **Julie**, **Romualdo** (†) and **Febes**, **Luis, Jr.** and **Victoria**, **Monina** and **Jose Valera**, **Josefina** and **Constancio Item**, **Lourdes** and **Alfredo Jose** and **Emmanuel** and **Cynthia**; nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Faith Chapel of Don Bosco Church, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 28, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Avenue, Parañaque City after the 9:00 AM funeral Mass at Don Bosco Church.

EULOGIO DEL ROSARIO PAÑGAN

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 24, 2001 at the age of 89.

His bereaved wife **JULITA BACERO-PAÑGAN**; children **RAQUILINO** and **ERLINDA**, **MELCHOR** and **EMILIA**, **HERMINIA**, **EDUARDO** and **MONINA**; grandchildren **MA. RENEE**, **MA. RAQUEL**, **RYANN**, and **RAQUILINO II**, **ROMMEL**, **CARMELO**, **MELVIN**, **MEL ANTHONY**, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capitol Memorial Chapels, Inc., G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later, at the Ever Memorial Garden, Valenzuela City.

"The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want
He makes me lie down the green pastures
He leads me beside still waters
He restores my soul."
Psalm 23:12

Atty. Carlos S. Solis

Former Mayor of Lipa City

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 21, 2001
at the age of 78.

His dearest wife **Yoly**; and their children **Bobby** and **Sally** (nee Custodio), **Baby** and **Lito Bugarin**, **Brigitte** and **Arthur Gerhardinger**, **Joy** and **Nestor Alfonte**, **Lani**, **Diana** and **Joey Rojo**, **Grace** and **Andrew Robertson**, **Aletha**; their grandchildren **Kristin**, **Carlo**, **Shasha**, **Nikki**, **Chella**, **Krystal**, **Cara** and **Alyssa**; his sister **Aurora Villaruz** and her family, relatives and friends request for prayers for his eternal joy and peace.

His remains lie in state at the 2nd Floor Mortuary, San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City, and will be transferred to the Sanggunian Bayan Session Hall, Lipa City Hall at 3:00 p.m. today April 26, 2001.

There will be a necrological service tomorrow Friday, April 27, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. at Lipa City Hall.

Interment to follow after the Mass at 10:00 a.m. at San Sebastian Cathedral.

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Genesis 1:3

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Cor. 5:8

MAGNO "JUN" PROSPERO FALCON, JR.

His wife **Amy**; children **Dennis** and **Bilet**, **Dick** and **Glenda**, **Joy**, **Jen**; grandchildren **Francis**, **Neycoll** and **Sidney**; request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel I of the Loyola Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on April 28, 2001, 8:00 a.m. at the North Cemetery.

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Q.E.P.D.

DOLORES (LOLITA) MUSCAT vda. de SARTHOU

(Dama de la Caridad)

Entregó su alma al Creador en Toronto, Canada
el 20 de Abril de 2001

Viuda del difunto Ramón Sarthou y Avecilla

Sus desconsolados hijos:
Ramón (Pocholo) y Carmen Trillo
Alberto (Albert)
Fernando (Chiqui)

nietos:
Maria Lourdes (Marilou) y Jim Lacson
Ramón José (R.J.)
Maria del Carmen (Pamen) y Jovy Lacson

biznietos:
Alessandra
Jaime
Isabella
Javier

sobrinos, sobrinas y demás parientes agradecen una oración por el eterno descanso de su alma.

Una misa, celebrada por Fr. James Reuter, S.J., tendrá lugar en la Iglesia de St. James, Cuenca St., Ayala Alabang, el sabado, 28 de Abril de 2001 a las 10 de la mañana.

La familia agradece á su enfermera, Candy Dulguime, á quien cuidó de la difunta por 8 años mientras padecía de Alzheimer's disease.

---

†

Daniel Cerbo Romualdez

February 6, 1952 -- April 23, 2001

In the morning of April 23, 2001 our beloved brother *Danny* died in the peace of the Lord, and joined our parents **Froilan** and **Josefina**, and our brother **Noel** into everlasting life. As he wished, he was cremated and interred immediately after at the Santuario de San Antonio Crypts, at Forbes Park in Makati City.

As we commend his spirit to his Creator, we his brothers and sisters **Bobby**, **Vicky Janolo**, **Boy (Froilan Jr.)**, **Cindy Velez**, **Raqui Ledesma**, **Susan Locsin**, **Patty Baluyut**, **Nina Viola**, and our spouses and children, would like to thank God for the gift of life and for making us a part of chapters of a book in the life of our brother *Danny*.

Agustin "Hammy" Sotto

April 20, 1950 - April 24, 2001

His bereaved mother **Aida Laguda**; sisters and brothers, **Sandra**, **Joy**, **Geraldine**, **Paz**, **Manuel**, **Jacinto**, **Victor**, **Daniel**, **Jasmine**, **Sara**, **Fulton**, **Alex** and **Aida**; siblings-in-law; nephews and nieces; and other relatives request the reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio Parish, McKinley Rd., Forbes Park, Makati City. Cremation service will follow after the 9 A.M. Holy Mass on Friday, April 27.

"I am the resurrection and the life,
He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies; and whoever
believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

ERNESTO GUAT GO

(Municipal Mayor of Currimao, Ilocos Norte)

Peacefully joined his Creator on Sunday, April 22, 2001 at the age of 70.

His bereaved wife **ROSARIO CHUA GO**; children **STEVEN**, **WILBUR (†)**, **DICKIE**, **DODIE**, **ANNABELLE** and **GLADYS**; sister **DELITA**; sons-in-law **JOHN** and **ALBERT**; daughters-in-law **NATALINE**, **SANDRA** and **ROSEMARIE**; grandsons **ERWIN WILBERT** and **ERNESTO II**; granddaughters **JILLIANE ROSS**, **NICOLE ERIN**, **JEANELLE DARI**, **MONICA LOUISE**, **CHELSEA**, **CAITLIN HEYLEY**, **JASMINE DANIELLE**, **DANIELLE ROSE**, **DENNICA RYA**; mother-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces and relatives request friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at their residence at Poblacion I, Currimao, Ilocos Norte.

Interment will be on April 28, 2001 at 11:00 a.m., Currimao, Ilocos Norte.

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good.
His love is everlasting."

Our dearest Mama,

Iluminada "Luming" Wenceslao-Sumpaico

has gone home to her Creator on April 24, 2001 at the age of 90.
She was a quiet woman who loved beyond measure.

We, the family,
Aquin, her faithful husband of 58 years
Reddie and **Sandy**, **Carlo**, **Lissa**, **Ninin**
Jojo and **Ditsy**, **Tippy** and **Obet**, **Jonjee, S.J.**, **Jaypee**, **Jong**
Lennie, S.J.
Mimi and **Bits**, **Tuton**, **Ayen**, **Cissy**, **Lara**
Didit
give thanks to our Lord for ***Mama's*** gift of LIFE.

Her remains will be waked at the Resurrection Chapel of Claret Church in Teacher's Village and will be transferred for interment to Bulacan, Bulacan on Saturday, April 28, 2001.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the S & W Kalinga Foundation, Inc., a non-profit foundation helping in the formation of future priests will be appreciated.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again.

2 Corinthians 5:4-5

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

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sprojects@inquirer.com.ph

Peace educator represents RP in world forum

CANLAS

DR. LILY Rodrigo Canlas, an educator who runs a progressive school espousing peace education in Better Living, Parañaque, represents the Philippines in the next World Forum on Early Care and Education ongoing in Athens, Greece on April 24-27, 2001. She is also the country's representative to the World Forum International Organizing Committee.

The World Forum is an annual event that promotes the improved delivery of pre-school education services for children by bringing together early childhood administrators, teachers, trainers, NGO leaders, advocates, researchers and public officials from six continents.

Canlas is known as a passionate crusader of peace education. The school she owns, the Jesu-Mariae School, has launched the "Peace...I like" campaign which has won support in the community.

She played an important role in last year's Singapore gathering when she brought to the forum then DECS secretary Dr. Lourdes S. Quisumbing who spoke on "Educating for Peace in Early Childhood" in connection with the Unesco's declaration for a decade of peace and non-violence in 2001-2010.

Canlas also heads the Coordinating Council for Early Childhood Education in the Philippines, Inc. (Concep), a coordinating body of DECS on pre-school concerns, specifically pre-school programs that will become the foundation of early childhood education in the Philippines.

Concep hopes to foster sustainable, quality pre-school education through accreditation with Miriam College Foundation Graduate School, the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools Colleges and Universities (Paascu), the Center for Early Childhood Care and Development (CECCD), the OB Montessori Child and Community Foundation, Inc., Museo Pambata, and the World Forum on International Child Exchange.

Concep hopes to bring more participants to represent the Philippines in the World Forum in Athens. For more information, call 823-5972/823-7875, fax 823-9226.

PDI-ADBOARD MOA

The Philippine Daily Inquirer recently signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard) on proper clearance for print materials with "No.1" claim, sexy print materials and infant food products. Photo shows AdBoard chair Susan Dimacali, (center), PDI SVP for sales and advertising Renato Reinoso, (second from right) signing the MOA, with witnesses (from left) AdBoard executive director; Oscar T. Valenzuela, AdBoard treasurer and ACRC chair; Jose Y. Sy and PDI VP advertising Felipe Olarte.

Camping by the river at Riverbanks

WHO says spending your summer vacation outdoors should be heavy on the pocket and should be planned rigorously? There's a place close to home where you can pitch your tent and catch the summer fever all year round—and even get a panoramic view of one of the cleanest rivers in Metro Manila. For as low as P20 per person, stay at the two-hectare Riverbank's Campsite overlooking Marikina River. The Campsite provides a close-to-nature camping experience without actually leaving the city. Aside from sharing stories around the bonfire while toasting marshmallows, campers can roam around the dynamic Riverbanks Center and try the other attractions such as pedal boats, bikes, off-road cars and horseback rides.

Likewise ideal for team-building activities and family gatherings, the Riverbanks Campsite has an activity area and a clubhouse on top of other camping utilities offered at affordable rates. The campsite recently opened to a festive jungle-inspired theme. For inquiries, call Zarah at 948-9794, 948-9796.

Contract Signing
SEASON'S RESTAURANT
SECURITY BANK CENTER, MAKATI CITY

THE FIRST PEOPLE WEBSITE

Datablade Inc. introduces cityprosdb.com, the first website that zeroes in on people, especially those with skills, expertise and products to sell. Datablade has forged an alliance with EasyCall for cityprosdb's direct dial-up connection and server co-location. Shown in photo (from left) are Reynaldo Dedicatoria, SVP for Internet, EasyCall; Edgardo Abalos, EVP general manager, EasyCall; Ramon Tengco, chair, Datablade; and Francis Cezar Perez, president and CEO, Datablade.

Get 'gata' easy, economically

LORENZANA Food Corporation (LFC) launches Filtaste Gata in line with the manufacturer's thrust to continuously offer innovative products to Filipino consumers.

According to LFC president George U. Lorenzana, Filtaste Gata is the answer to busy mothers and housewives who do not have much time in homemaking. "They can now easily prepare their favorite ginataan dishes, curries, soups, stews or even their favorite desserts and frostings without going through the tedious process of preparing the coconut milk," he says.

Filtaste Gata, packed in 400-ml cans, is equivalent to 2.5 fresh coconuts and can be used straight from the can. Just pour to cook. The unused portion, if refrigerated, remains fresh for three days. It is also has a shelf life of two to three years.

Apart from being affordable, time-saving and convenient, Filstate Gata is clean and healthy, and has the real flavor of fresh coconut milk. It is cholesterol-free and has less fat than the regular hand-made coconut milk.

Filtaste Gata is now available at promo prices in Metro Manila's leading supermarkets and groceries and will be available nationwide soon.

As LFC celebrates its 93rd year in business, it stands by its commitment to further improve and develop products that caters to the Filipino taste through research and development.

NEW VRB CEO

Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Waldo Q. Flores recently inducted into office Brigadier General Manuel B. Mariano (AFP) Ret. as chair and chief executive officer of the Videogram Regulatory Board under the Office of the President. He officially replaces lawyer Enrique M. Montero.

XXX

PLDT myDSL, a high-velocity Internet, recently signed an agreement to sponsor the Golf Club of the Year 2000 Awarding Ceremony, an annual project of Inquirer Golf Monthly and GG&A Club Shares which will be held at the Grand Ballroom of Wack Wack Golf and Country Club on Friday, April 27. Shown in photo are (from left) Eduardo Galvez, managing director of GG&A Club Shares; Raul S. Alvarez, AVP, marketing services of PLDT; Kenny G. Nuyda, advertising manager of Philippine Daily Inquirer; (standing from left) Julius Gomez, marketing and communication manager of GG&A; Sharlyn Claveria-Lim, marketing services analyst of PLDT and Hazel L. Soriaga, marketing officer of Inquirer.

NORTHWESTERN ALUMNI CLUB MEETING

The founding publisher of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Eugenia "Eggie" Apostol, was guest of honor at the monthly meeting of the Northwestern Alumni Club at E-Café, SGV Bldg., Ayala Avenue. In photo are (seated from left) J-Ann Rivera, Aida Mendoza, club president Dennis Valdes, Ms Apostol and Olive Villafuerte; standing (from left) Bibsy Carballo, Trix Guerrero, Steve Gan, Cezar Yatco, Jojo Poe, Laura Lim, Ed Tordesillas, Tim Renn, Cesar Purisima and Bobby Macasaet.

TOP SALES MANAGERS HONORED

Standard Insurance Co., Inc. the leading motorcar insurance company, recently recognized its top branch heads for exemplary sales and service performance in its annual branch of the year award. In photo, (first row from left) Anatole Dan R. Viray, Iloilo branch, fifth place; Zaldy G. Rodriguez, Batangas branch, first place; Mariano G. Sim, Jr., Dagupan branch, Branch of the Year; Florido Temblor, Dumaguete branch, second place; Antonio B. Espejo, Ortigas branch, third place; Ariston F. Miñez, Antique branch, fourth place. Behind are the officers of the company. Second row from left Amelia M. Hernandez, FVP for audit; Edena B. Enfestan, AVP for claims; Bernardita H. Oruga, manager for general services; Maribeth C. Castro, AVP for risk management; Ernesto T. Echauz, president; Lawyer Celso de las Alas, SVP for legal; Estela P. Domingo, SVP for treasury and human resource development; Edith D. Sumajit, SVP for accounting; Susan U. Guanio, FVP for branches marketing; Leticia C. Tendero, consultant; Carmel N. Berkenkotter, AVP for general affairs.

BITS & Clips

Manila Concert Choir at 50

THE MANILA Concert Choir celebrates its 50th anniversary. Founder and conductor Dr. Lois Florendo-Bello holds a series of MCC concerts throughout the year. The first is the kickoff concert at Philamlife Auditorium on Friday, April 27 at 7 p.m. to be conducted by Prof. Romulo Pizaña.

Maharlikang Pilipino search ongoing

BAHAGHARI Productions, Inc. announces the national search for the Maharlikang Pilipino. On its 7th year, the annual event seeks talented and impressive young men who typify the best in the Filipino. First screening will be on Monday, April 30 at Room 407, Dona Amparo Building, Espana Avenue corner Tolentino Street. Look for Prof. Greg Mil Palacio at 735-7257.

Adult learning program at Miriam

THE MIRIAM College Summer Adult Learning Program offers a non-degree course to adults 55 years old and above starting April 16. The last session on Friday, April 27, teaches participants on the fundamentals of improving memory and coping with sleeping disorders. For inquiries, call Laarni Zapanta at 927-2421 loc. 288 or 204, 434-0950.

CAP College grad rites

DEPARTMENT of Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose "Joey" David Lina, Jr. will be the guest of honor at the first CAP College Regional Commencement Exercises for Region IV at CAP Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Saturday, April 28. Governor Teresita Lazaro will receive a plaque of appreciation.

Chacra summer workshops

THE CENTER for Health and Creative Arts (Chacra), a holistic community center, conducts summer workshops. Jim Paredes conducts "Tapping the Creative Universe" workshop 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays up to May 9. Nonoy Ozaeta conducts his "Angel Workshop" 9 a.m. to 12 noon on April 27, May 2 and 3. Chacra is located at 144 B. Gonzales Street, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Call Chacra from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 426-5368 and 434-5381, or e-mail chacra@netgazer.com.ph.

Hacap hairstyling competition

THE 20TH Hacap National Hairstyling and Make-Up competition and Wella Seminar will be held on Friday, April 27 at the Philippine Trade Training Center on Roxas Boulevard from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For tickets, call 818-8494, 731-4452, 736-9853, 241-1576, 433-3295, 641-8957, or 525-4797.

UP MA, MPS fellowships

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Population Institute is pleased to announce the availability of fellowships for those interested in pursuing a degree either in Master of Arts in Demography or Master in Population Studies beginning June. Deadline for submission of application forms is on May 1. Write to the Director, UPPI, third floor Palma Hall, Diliman, Quezon City or call 920-5402 or 927-4166. E-mail UPPI at popinst@up.edu.ph.

LCF celebrates Earth Day

THE LEAGUE of Corporate Foundations joins different sectors in a series of week-long activities celebrating Earth Day 2001 which kicked off Saturday, April 21. Spearheaded by the LCF Environment Committee (EnviCom), the activities began the day before Earth Day with Petron Foundation joining the Bakawanan sa Bataan. The LCF EnviCom took part in simultaneous Earth Day celebrations at the Malacañang Palace, the CCP Complex, Glorietta and at the Fort. Celine Agas, LCF executive director, noted that the group's participation in the Earth Day celebrations indicate its readiness to be a part of activities that uplift the lives of Filipinos.

Hang Ten salutes batch 2001

YOUTH apparel brand Hang Ten will honor the most outstanding graduates of the ten largest public high schools in Metro Manila through "Perfect 10: A Tribute to Young Achievers." Hang Ten will award the ten class valedictorians during their commencement exercises with a glass engraved "Perfect 10 Trophy" and a "Perfect 10 Gold Medal. Hang Ten will also give cash prizes and gift certificates.

Señeres at Kapihan

NLRC chair Roy V. Señeres will discuss vital current labor issues at the breakfast forum of Kapihan sa Klub today, April 26, 7:30 a.m. at the Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan. Former Vice President and Kapihan chair Dr. Salvador H. Laurel will give a short talk following Kapihan founding president lawyer Alfredo G. Ablaza's welcome remarks.

Concert for senior citizens

THE FEDERATION of the Senior Citizen Association of the Philippines (FSCAP) will hold a concert titled "Aging Well With a Beautiful Heart"—a tribute to the musical performers of yesteryears—on Friday, April 27 at 4 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum.

Warehouse sale on computers

NEXT Best Computers NBC, a specialized sales store on slightly used computers, will launch a three-day discount sale "Warehouse Sale, Pwede Tawad Pa" starting Friday, April 27 to 29. Next Best Computers (tel. 896-9996, telefax 890-5287), is located at 806 JP Rizal Street, Makati City. NBC gives a four-day money-back guarantee, a three-month full warranty on its second-hand items.

Real Estate review set

THE REAL Estate Brokers Association of the Philippines (Rebap) Caloocan City Chapter will hold its 17th comprehensive real estate seminar and review on April 28, May 5, 12 and 19, Saturdays, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Aristocrat Restaurant Munoz Branch in Edsa corner Congressional Avenue, Quezon City. Interested parties are invited to visit the Rebap Caloocan City office at 956-E Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City, or call 438-2966 and ask for Jenny Ontimare or Jane Piamonte Mondays to Fridays, at 373-2280/81 and ask for Vicky and Michelle.

MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Striking employees put to test 'rollover' risk of Toyota itself

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

REVO production line at a TMP plant

THE AUTO industry's attention was focused on Toyota Motors Philippines during the two-week standoff. The March 28 employees' strike hogged the headlines, and hit the country's most prolific Asian utility vehicle (AUV) and sedan maker like a summer storm. Tensions eased a bit when Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas asked the auto giant to temporarily take back the 227 dismissed workers until the National Labor Relations Commission solved the case. The problem started when 300 TMP workers staged a mass absence without leave from Feb. 21 to 23 to attend an ongoing DOLE hearing for the recognition of the TMP union. Line production was paralyzed. After a thorough investigation, 227 workers were dismissed.

Observers watched intently as an automotive technojunkie struggled to solve the complexities of labor-management relations.

In the two-week period, relationships were strained, opinions clashed, views collided. The strike involved 300 employees and affected its two assembly plants. The labor dispute likewise affected the 1,100 remaining employees who continued working during the crisis. The strike cost TMP P150 million.

But one thing was made certain for the employees after the strike. The bonding inside Toyota became stronger. It made everyone involved realize that the team couldn't let differences stop it from moving on. For the team that chose to continue to work on, the strike was just part of a company's growing pains.

For the striking employees, however, the fight continues.

Rock the boat

Vital players in the automotive sector and labor groups were monitoring the progress of the Toyota labor dispute. What caught everyone's attention was an April 9 news report that said TMP has had enough and was ready to pack up its bags and leave. The TMP union dismissed the news as "idle threats." The struggle pitted two government agencies attempting to negotiate—the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Labor and Employment. Observers noted the issue really involved the DTI trying to appease a major investor on one hand, and the DOLE trying to appease the workers on the other.

Who between the two is bending its policies a bit more? It's anybody's guess.

But there is no move to pack up and leave. Instead, the Japanese auto giant seems dead set on continuing its 12-year affair with the Philippines.

TMP is even set to go on full-scale operations next week with its Bicutan and Laguna plants, which have been producing 80 percent of Toyota's capacity since April 16. It is now trying to catch up on its two-week backlog.

Some moved

The strike forced Toyota's crucial groups to set up satellite offices in other areas.

During the strike, the production line stopped. The "just-in-time" parts delivery and inventory policy were affected. Even before, however, Toyota felt a looming crisis was underway, so it produced a number of backup units to replenish its inventory. Supplies were moved out of the company premises and Toyota conducted advanced releasing.

The healing process now includes Toyota reassuring its workers and its 21 dealers nationwide that everything's back to normal and that Toyota is here to stay.

But the storm is not over. Toyota Motor Philippines media relations officer Ariel de Jesus said that whatever happens, Toyota is ready.

"You can't say that the worst is over. These workers (strikers) for a time were part of one big happy Toyota family until this thing happened," he said.

As to the news that the giant automaker was abandoning its Philippine ship, De Jesus said that Toyota was not talking about a major pack-up-and-go at the time.

"Toyota won't let go. We have a commitment to our customers," he said.

A new dimension in 1.6-liter motoring

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

"THE NEW Civic Dimension. It's Big. It's Beautiful." Is this ad claim true?

In terms of dimension and bigness, yes—when the new Honda Civic is compared to the previous generation Civic. The first time I sat behind the wheel of a 2001 Civic VTi-S, I got the impression I was in a junior Accord. It's that different.

And it's not merely a first impression thing. Honda really did design a roomier seventh-generation Civic. The main aim of increasing interior space was achieved even though the exterior dimension was reduced. In spite of being shorter in overall length, the 2001 Civic enlarged rear leg room by 49 mm and hip point by 25 mm. Moreover, the new Civic's floor in the rear is completely flat, enabling the middle passenger to sit comfortably.

While Honda cropped the new Civic's front overhang, it increased the rear overhang length and modified the rear suspension, thereby increasing trunk space by one cubic-foot. This translates into a trunk capacity of 438 liters from the old model's 410 liter and a bigger trunk opening height.

So all right already, the new Civic is more spacious inside than its competitors, the Toyota Corolla and the Nissan Sentra. But what about the "It's beautiful" part of the ad?

This is where matters get iffy. From the side, the new Civic resembles the previous generation Civic. From the front, its slat-type grille and massive hood remind you of the Accord. From the back, the taillights bring to mind the Mitsubishi Lancer. But then, the appreciation of car design has always been subjective.

Honda somewhat compensated for the derivative styling by packing the 2001 Civic with unique goodies other than spacious comfort and a flat floor. For starters, the top-of-the-line VTi-S variant is equipped with an in-dash Kenwood MP3/CD tuner, the first car audio that supports MP3-encoded CDs. Since a single MP3 CD can contain more than 10 hours of music, you need not litter your car with jewel cases. But if you're not yet into downloading music files from the Internet, the Kenwood can also play conventional CDs. The downside: it has only four speakers.

The minor pluses are a total of four cupholders (two in the center console in front, two in the rear armrest), cubbyholes in the center console and door bins. The two cardholders located beside the front cupholders are extremely practical. After driving a VTi-S for a week, I have concluded that, aside from being roomier, the new Civic is plusher, more comfy and more refined than previous models. It also has lower noise, vibration and harshness levels.

However, to implement the cab-forward design and maximize passenger space while retaining or reducing exterior dimensions, Honda sacrificed the one asset that set the Civic apart from other compact cars: its 4-wheel independent double wishbone suspension system. Honda replaced the front double wishbone in the new Civic with cheaper McPherson struts, thereby dismaying high-performance car buffs who admired the old Civic's superb agility and road handling. Nonetheless, Honda claims that its new toe-control link strut-type suspension and improved rear double wishbone provide a better and more stable ride.

Perhaps. At least, as if to make amends, Honda dropped its state-of-the-art 1.6-liter single-overhead camshaft VTEC 3 powerplant into the engine bay, replacing the 2-stage SOHC VTEC engine of old. The 3-stage VTEC adds a medium-rpm setting that results in flat and more stable torque at 2,000-5,000 rpm, the normal engine speed in daily city driving, while achieving better fuel efficiency. Horsepower has been upgraded to 130 ps/6,600 rpm in the 1.6-liter variants (VTi-S and VTi) from 125 ps/6,400 in the old Civic, while the LXi's modified 1.5-liter SOHC engine produces 110 ps/5,800 rpm, up from 105/6,400. This makes the LXi as powerful as the 1.6-liter offerings of other makes.

The higher horsepower casts into doubt the charge that Honda has transformed the Civic from a fun-to-drive, high-performance sports compact into a family man-oriented sedan, chick car or mom mobile—although the phaseout of the 160-hp Civic SiR from the local market seems to bolster that view. The top-of-the-line VTi-S has the same 130-hp VTEC 3 engine as the VTi (P720,000 for manual, P755,000 automatic) but costs P798,000 because it comes with automatic transmission only and has dual airbags, ABS with electronic brake force distribution and the MP3/CD tuner. The 1.5-liter non-VTEC LXi sells for P663,000 (manual) and P693,000 (automatic). Do I see driving enthusiasts making a beeline for the manual transmission VTi?

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Stop global whining.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla @pacific.net.ph.

2 firms join efforts to increase vehicle technology expertise

AS A RESULT of the recent strategic alliance forged between General Motors Corp., the world's No. 1 car manufacturer, and Fuji Heavy Industries, one of Japan's leading transportation-related companies, GMC will tap FHI in developing next-generation vehicles.

FHI has been known worldwide as a pioneer in all-wheel drive (AWD) and horizontally opposed engine technologies. This pioneering stance is consistent with its car manufacturing philosophy of "active driving, active safety"—a philosophy borne out of the knowledge that driving enjoyment and safety are coherent of each other. This philosophy is best exemplified in the combination of AWD system and horizontally opposed engines used in Subaru cars.

"With FHI's pioneering work in specialized technologies such as AWD and horizontally opposed engines, this partnership will be mutually beneficial to both parties, since this will lay down the groundwork for future advancements in vehicle safety and manufacturing that Filipino customers will appreciate," said Harold Koh, president and general manager of General Motors Philippines (GMPh), the first GMC business unit to distribute Subaru vehicles worldwide.

Assurance

With all the wheels applying the driving force to the ground at all times in an AWD system, Subaru car owners are assured of driving stability and safety since this type of system provides fundamentally strong road traction in adverse driving and climate conditions.

To ensure the integrity of the AWD system in the Subaru, road tests are carried out not only on the test course but also in all types of environments. Subaru vehicles are subjected to intense road conditions running in locations with temperatures below -30°C in Northern Europe, above 50°C in deserts, under the high-speed driving conditions of the German autobahn and under the challenging driving conditions of mountainous areas.

Unmatched performance

The performance of Subaru's horizontally opposed engine is also unmatched. Its pistons, arranged in 180 degree arrays on the left and right bank, are positioned to resemble two well-trained boxers exchanging punches as it moves in a left-right motion. Having cylinders, which move in sync on the left and right sides minimize vibrations and provide good rotational balance, thus ensuring smooth acceleration. In comparison to other engine formats, it is very compact in terms of its length and height. Thus, the engine's center of gravity can be set lower and closer to the center of the car, enabling much better and more stable cornering. Furthermore, in the event of a frontal crash, passengers are better protected because the lower set engine is forced below the cabin.

Aside from car technology-sharing, GMC will also distribute Subaru cars with GMPh—starting with the sports safety vehicle (SSV) Subaru Forester—through its retail and service network, GM AutoWorld.

The Subaru will be the latest addition to GM AutoWorld's stable of prestigious brands like Chevrolet, Opel and Suzuki. GM AutoWorld centers, which are strategically located in Makati, Quezon City, Pampanga and Cebu, will exclusively distribute Subaru vehicles in the country.

How to get ready for long distance trip

THE DRIVER must be physically healthy and mentally alert. Stamina, concentration and decisiveness are also required. Before rolling down the road on a long trip, check out the following list to see whether you are really up to the mark.

- Did you have a restful night prior to the trip—that is, at least six hours of sound sleep, and wake up without a trace of fatigue? Make sure you did not take any medication that might cause drowsiness later on. Strictly avoid taking tranquilizers.
- You should feel fresh, and not too hungry or too full. Persons suffering from epilepsy or intestinal disorders should resign themselves to passenger seats. An extremely shortsighted driver should also do likewise. Are you mentally alert? Let others drive if you are drunk or still struggling against hangover. Also, do not drive if you are in an angry or depressed mood, deeply worried about certain things, or perhaps want to reach your destination in a rush.
- Your attire must be sufficiently comfortable. Ladies should avoid wearing high-heels while driving. Shoes with good ventilation are recommended.
- Avoid clothes that are too tight. Pants are probably best for ladies.

Take along sunglasses that are not too dark, just in case you have to drive through an extremely bright period of the day.

Preparing your car

Take a close look at the following items:

- . Under the hood: check the coolant water in the expansion tank, the dipstick, as well as the brake and clutch fluid. Make sure they are at the proper level. Are the belts' tension and condition agreeable? Also check other items as recommended by your car manual.
- Outside: Is the pressure of all tires, including spare, too low or too high? If in doubt, follow the manual's suggestions. What about the lights and the horn, are they in good order?
- Arrange the luggage, if any, in an orderly fashion. Those that are moveable while the car is in motion should be secured firmly in place.
- Every car can safely carry so much loads, passengers or otherwise. Too much weight could cause serious damages as a result, for instance:
- Damage to the car—The engine has to work harder, thus requiring more fuel and most probably will wear out sooner. The car's suspension system will also yield sooner as well.
- Car handling—It will take longer distance and more time to bring the car to a complete stop. Its stability will also be adversely affected. If the load is in the back, the car's front will lift up and at night, throw its headlight beams at cars passing in the opposite direction, which could be fatal. Besides, a car in this condition is difficult to control. It can only move slowly uphill, while its speed downhill can be dangerously too fast.

To feel more confident, Honda recommends that you take the car to your favorite service center and ask for a thorough long distance checkup. Have a very pleasant long distance trip.

TARGA TASMANIA 2001 ENTRY

This 1957 Porsche 356 coupé race car was flown out to Australia from Heathrow to race in the Targa Tasmania 2001, the recreation of the Italian Targa open road race events from the prewar and postwar years. The race takes place over six days and covers over 2,000 kilometers. An exciting international classic tarmac rally with competitive stages on closed roads for the best touring, sport and GT cars in the world, the Targa Tasmania started in April 1992. The car is sponsored and flown by UK cargo Wintair and Emirates.

Diners Club offers road assistance to motorists

DINERS Club, the world's first credit card, understands the daily anguish that motorists face on the road every single driving day of their lives. This is why Diners Club has partnered with Bathala Marketing Industries Inc. to deliver round-the-clock unparalleled road emergency assistance to all club members. With road assistance, club members are assured of road assistance privilege and they can put to rest their anxieties over driving.

Club members can register up to 3 vehicles and each registered vehicle is entitled to not just one but three free roadside assistance benefits—jumpstarting of battery, change of flat tire, or even emergency gasoline purchase.

Also, club members can avail of one free emergency towing service within Metro Manila. They also get free labor on minor tune-ups and oil change if materials are purchased from the BMII. Best of all, club members get free vehicle accident damage claim assistance if the vehicle is repaired by the BMII and the insurance company is affiliated with the BMII.

Club members are also entitled to discounts at motor shops, including CarSavers and Ziebart TidyCar. All these services can be easily accessed by calling customer service at 887-91-88.

"With road assistance, not only do club members receive unmatched service and enjoy extraordinary features, they also benefit from knowing that wherever they are and whatever may happen to them while confronting the hazards of city driving, Diners Club is dedicated to their safety, security and convenience," says Ronald Bibonia, first vice president for business development of Security International Card Corp., issuer of Diners Club cards in the Philippines.

Best Holy Week ever

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza

THE BEST Holy Week I had was the last one.

I drove out of Manila in the company of my loved ones on Holy Tuesday for Pangasinan. Perfect as there was no traffic at all.

We had lunch twice by the beach, on a makeshift dining table. Bangus, oysters and squid were roasted on orange coals by a young vendor who peddled oysters by the *balde*. I bought 2 *baldes* the first time we met him at the beach and his day was done.

When I offered him P100 as his cooking chores, he refused.

"Too much sir," said the teenage boy, maybe only 15, whose sunburnt skin glistened in the sun. Man, he could roast!

When I offered him P90, he obliged. He smiled engagingly upon receiving the money.

The boiled rice I ordered from a nearby *sari-sari* store. We got our rice direct from the pot. Cost: P100. Good for 10 persons—8 adults and 2 toddlers, the youngest being 2 years old.

We drove back to Manila on Good Friday. Again, perfect. No traffic at all.

When we got home, surprisingly, no weary mind, no aching joints, no tired bones.

I guess I'd adopt that schedule again next year, God permitting.

* * *

Hey, here's a real bargain.

The Toyota Echo can be had for P312,000, the balance of P312,000 to be paid for two years with no interest. At P13,000 a month.

Drive home a Toyota Verso for P359,500 and the balance of P359,500 will be paid for two years with no interest, too. At P14,979 a month.

The Echo is a 1300cc wonder and the Verso is 1.5cc. Both 16-valve and equipped with VTi engines, Toyota's latest state-of-the- art engines.

But the biggest feature of both rides is their being extremely fuel-efficient. Each goes for a 14 per liter ride!

One of my dream buys is the Toyota Rav 4, which sells at P1.3 million.

But because I don't have that much money, will either the Echo or Verso suffice?

C'mon Ariel DJ, give me some more discounts, will ya?

On the Rav 4, I mean.

* * *

Honda and Toyota have not stopped in their pursuit to make their vehicles the safest in the world. Athough Volvo seems to be ahead of the pack when it comes to safety features in cars sold worldwide, Honda and Toyota have not stopped in their respective bids to outdo each other in terms of making our rides safe at all times.

Consider the following:

"Nikkei *Sangyo* has reported that Honda Civic and Toyota's Estima minivan outperformed the competition in driver and passenger safety in crash tests performed by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the National Organization for Automobile Safety and Victims' Aid.

"The tests covered 24 of the most popular models of passenger cars sold in Japan last year. Both the Civic and the Estima received the top ratings of all cars tested, scoring five out of a possible six starts for driver safety, and six out of six for passenger safety.

"As always, the tests included a 55 kph head-on collision with a concrete wall, and a side-on collision at the same speed.

"This year for the first time, the tests also included a glancing collision on the driver's side with a concrete wall at 64 kph.

"Honda and Toyota have been putting renewed emphasis on safety design and construction for the Civic and Estima models."

Very encouraging, indeed.

But wait. To the uninitiated, the Toyota Estima is the equivalent of the Toyota Previa in the United States. There are a lot of Previas now in the Philippines, brought in by Filipinos residing in America.

* * *

QUOTE ME. **When driving an automatic, don't brake too much. The one behind you will either be annoyed or confused.**

The drive of my life

BY VERNON B. SARNE

A VERY spirited drive with the Toyota Corolla Altis

TO SAY that I've driven a lot of cars is an understatement. In fact, I've driven cars even Jackie Enrile or Aga Muhlach can only dream of riding. I test-drive cars for a living and the prospect of steering even the most exotic automobile sometimes doesn't enthrall me anymore. When you've driven around world-famous race-tracks (Japan's Twin Ring Motegi, for instance) or huge proving grounds (Ford's Michigan Proving Ground comes to mind), anything short of a ride in a two-seat McLaren F1 car will fail to make you swoon.

Or so I thought.

Last Sunday, the water of the very pregnant wife broke a day earlier than her obstetrician had predicted. First baby, if you must know. I had been practicing to drive rudely and honk the horn relentlessly the past few weeks in anticipation of rushing the wife to the hospital. It turned out I really didn't have to. We rushed to the hospital very early morning, and there weren't much vehicles to cut and honk at.

Nevertheless, it was a very spirited drive. I didn't know the Toyota Corolla Altis could sprint and handle like a BMW M3 until then. Every turn, every step on the throttle, every upshift of the automatic gearbox felt as if the Altis were by far the most impressive vehicle I had ever driven. In fact, it felt so exhilarating, it brought out the wild driver in me. Literally. So wild, I became color-blind: All traffic lights appeared green to me. Prior to that, I had been a very courteous and law-abiding motorist. Guys, if you want a real adrenaline surge, don't go karting; rush your laboring wives to the hospital.

Exaggeration aside, I reckon I drove from Parañaque all the way to St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City—with one pitstop to pick up the in-laws—in less than 15 minutes. It was pole position from start to finish. My wreath and trophy arrived six hours later, after much fidgeting about the waiting lounge and wondering whether my boy would grow up to like his name.

To everyone's consternation, I named him Ayrton Astro. It's almost sure he'll be proud of the first monicker. I will see to it by showing him jaw-dropping footage of Senna's driving brilliance. It's the second one I'm not too sure of. Let's just say I will try to turn him on to anime.

My 1:24 die-cast scale models of Ferraris and Formula One cars can't wait to see their new owner. Will Astro develop a passion for cars? Will he grow up to be another motoring journalist? I don't know. But I know that I shall support him even if he decides to review restaurants for a change.

My apologies to Viking Cars Inc. I committed to write about my impressive test drive of the S60 last week. But even Mika Hakkinen lost a lot of his zealousness and aggressiveness on the racetrack right after his little bundle of joy arrived last year. Likewise, motoring journalists—despite years of working with cold, heartless speed machines—still have emotions, you know.

When can the police suspend your license?

ANY number of violations can cause the suspension of your license. The MUST Handbook 2001, your everyday guide to the streets and highways of Metro Manila, lists down the specific instances when your license can be revoked or suspended. Remember too that all confiscated licenses involving a penalty of suspension/revocation shall be forwarded to the MMDA Traffic Adjudication Board where the necessary hearing shall be made.

The police can suspend/revoke your license if and only if:

- You are driving under the influence of liquor or prohibited drugs. If you're caught for a second time, your license will be suspended for a year in addition to paying a fine of P2,000. Subsequent violation shall cause the revocation of your license.
- You are using a fake driver's license. If you have an authentic license, it too will be confiscated and suspended for six months in addition to a fine of P1,500.
- You allow another person to use your driver's license. Your license will be suspended for a month and you will pay a fine of P500.
- Your motor vehicle is used and involved in the commission of a crime. In case of a court conviction, the driver's license shall be revoked.
- Involved in the illegal transfer of plates. Your license will be suspended for one month.
- You are guilty of committing the following "dangerous violations": overtaking on the shoulder/sidewalk; overtaking within the intersection; beating the red light; going against the flow of traffic; overspeeding at thickly populated areas.
- You are guilty of committing the following "intentional violations": parking within 6 meters from signalized intersection; parking at ingress and egress of hospitals, clinics, and fire stations; loading/unloading beyond the first lane as indicated by lane markings and/or within 6 meters from signalized intersection; loading/unloading within flyovers and interchanges including their approaches and exits; refusal to stop upon reasonable signal or instruction of an apprehending officer.
- Within any 12-month period, the driver shall have been convicted at least 3 times for the violation of any regulation issued by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Land Transportation Office or any municipality or city.

Lynx now nearly irresistible

GUTMAN: We're repackaging the Lynx as a trendy vehicle that most upwardly mobile yuppies can afford.
VERNON B. SARNE

IT'S always a pity when good cars sometimes get overlooked by the market. Take the case of the Ford Lynx. Although a very decent compact sedan—thanks to Ford Motor Co. Phils.' world-class standards in manufacturing—the Lynx has, for some reason, often drowned in the overwhelming popularity of its rivals, specifically the Honda Civic and the Toyota Corolla. That the Nissan Sentra and the Mitsubishi Lancer have been recipients of recent improvements doesn't help the Lynx's cause either.

Granted that the 1.6-liter Lynx is the product of rebadging (based on the Mazda 323), Ford has gone mile upon extra mile just to please customers. As consumers, we know that any company striving to prove the quality of its product will eventually outdo the competition—the latter almost always succumbing to overconfidence. Not that either Honda or Toyota has been lax in giving buyers value for money. But in the game of throwing all the desirable features at the market, Ford's marketing people are as good as any team in the business.

Last week, Ford presented to the motoring press the 2001 Lynx featuring upgrades which the carmaker thinks will sway a big chunk of market confidence in its direction. Ford vice president for marketing and sales Dave Gutman, believing that a car company needs to do something new every three months to survive in such a cutthroat trade, said that they are repackaging the Lynx as a trendy vehicle that most upwardly mobile young professionals can afford.

Already owning the distinction of being the first compact sedan to offer leather seats, the Lynx just got even more endearing. Outside, both the Lynx Ghia and GSI now boast three new paint jobs: pepper red, bright island blue, and amazon green. Check out the new blue color; it was a hit among the journalists. The two variants now also feature European-inspired white side repeater lamps.

Most of the upgrades, however, are found inside. The enhanced audio system now has two A-pillar tweeters for a crisper surround sound. For security freaks, the Lynx is now equipped with a remote keyless entry and alarm system. Also added are seat-back pockets and a rear window shade.

Unique to the Lynx Ghia is the new 12-disc CD changer located in the trunk.

The Lynx Ghia is now priced at P745,000 for the automatic and P710,000 for the manual. The Lynx GSI sells for P655,000 (automatic) and P620,000 (manual).

Vernon B. Sarne

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Kymco's Pulsar 125 hits the streets

S.C. KYMCO Pilipinas Inc., the local manufacturer of Taiwan-made Kymco motorcycles and scooters, recently unveiled the latest addition to its growing product line—the Pulsar 125.

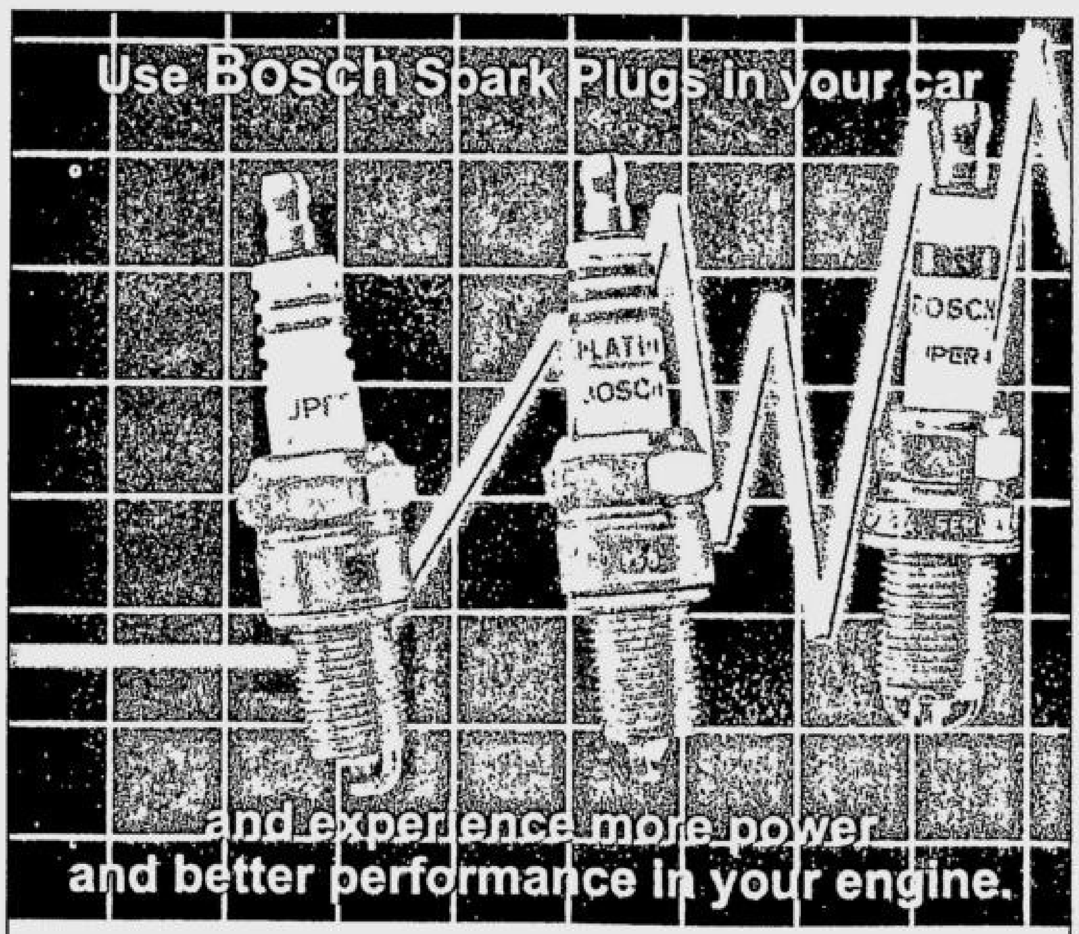
According to Gilbert Limjoco, Kymco vice president for operations, the versatile, dual-purpose Pulsar is designed for the practical rider who wants, for city riding, a sleek and elegant motorbike yet sporty enough to take the challenges of a weekend swing in the rugged off-road trails.

"Aside from being a sports bike, a business bike and a utility bike, the Pulsar 125 is light and easy to handle to be the family bike. With its rear mounted, heavy-duty luggage carrier, it can be mommy's grocery bike," Limjoco said.

The new model is powered by a 125-cc, environment-friendly 4-stroke gas engine. It can safely weave through traffic-clogged city streets or adeptly sail through dust and mud in the countryside with its alloy wheels, reliable disk brakes and advance suspension system.

The Pulsar features a modern CDI ignition and a no-hassle electric starter. For eye-straining night riding, the practical motorcycle is mounted with powerful halogen head lights.

The new Pulsar 125 will be displayed at the Transport Show from April 21 to 29 at the SM Megamall's Megatrade Hall from 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.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BUSINESS

IMF head says world economy in risky stage

WASHINGTON—The dramatic economic slowdown in the United States means the global economy has entered a "critical phase" where policy coordination between nations will be especially important, according to the head of the International Monetary Fund.

IMF managing director Horst Koehler said a key issue for the spring meetings of the 183-nation IMF and its sister lending agency, the World Bank, would be to demonstrate that growth-oriented policies were being pursued in the major industrial countries as well as developing nations.

"I have no doubt that with the right policy response, the global economy will recover in the latter part of this year," Koehler said in an interview with a small group of reporters.

The IMF has reduced its forecast for this year based on the fact that growth in the United States, the world's biggest economy, has slowed so sharply. This has raised fears that a US recession could end a record 10-year long economic expansion.

"It must be the objective of this meeting and beyond this meeting to keep the global economy on track," Koehler said. He said without a growth strategy in place, it would be "much more difficult for countries like Indonesia, like Turkey and Argentina to come out of the mess."

The IMF is considering requests for emergency loans to help those three nations stabilize economies that are currently in turmoil.

Koehler said he believed it was important not to become overly pessimistic.

"We feel it's appropriate not to paint everything in negative terms," Koehler said. He noted that while overall economic growth had slowed in the United States, consumer spending, including demand for autos and houses, had held up reasonably well. *AP*

Lack of transparency costs countries billions

WASHINGTON—Corruption, cloudy economic policies and muddy procedures in the legal, regulatory and accounting field have cost countries ranging from Brazil to Japan hundreds of billions of dollars in lost foreign investment, according to a new study released on Tuesday.

The report by PricewaterhouseCoopers attempts to measure the impact that "opacity"—defined as the lack of clear, accurate, easily discernible and widely accepted government and business practices—has on the ability of a country to attract foreign direct investment.

"Every unit of deterred FDI is a lost opportunity for faster economic growth," said James Schiro, chief executive of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

While many countries have been eager to cut tax rates or offer tax incentives to attract foreign investment, increasing transparency could have more effect, Schiro said.

The study looked at five factors—corruption, economic policy and legal, regulatory and accounting systems—to develop a composite opacity score for 35 countries.

While some had a higher "O" score than others, the authors resisted ranking countries for the initial report, said Joel Kurtzman, a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers. *Reuters*

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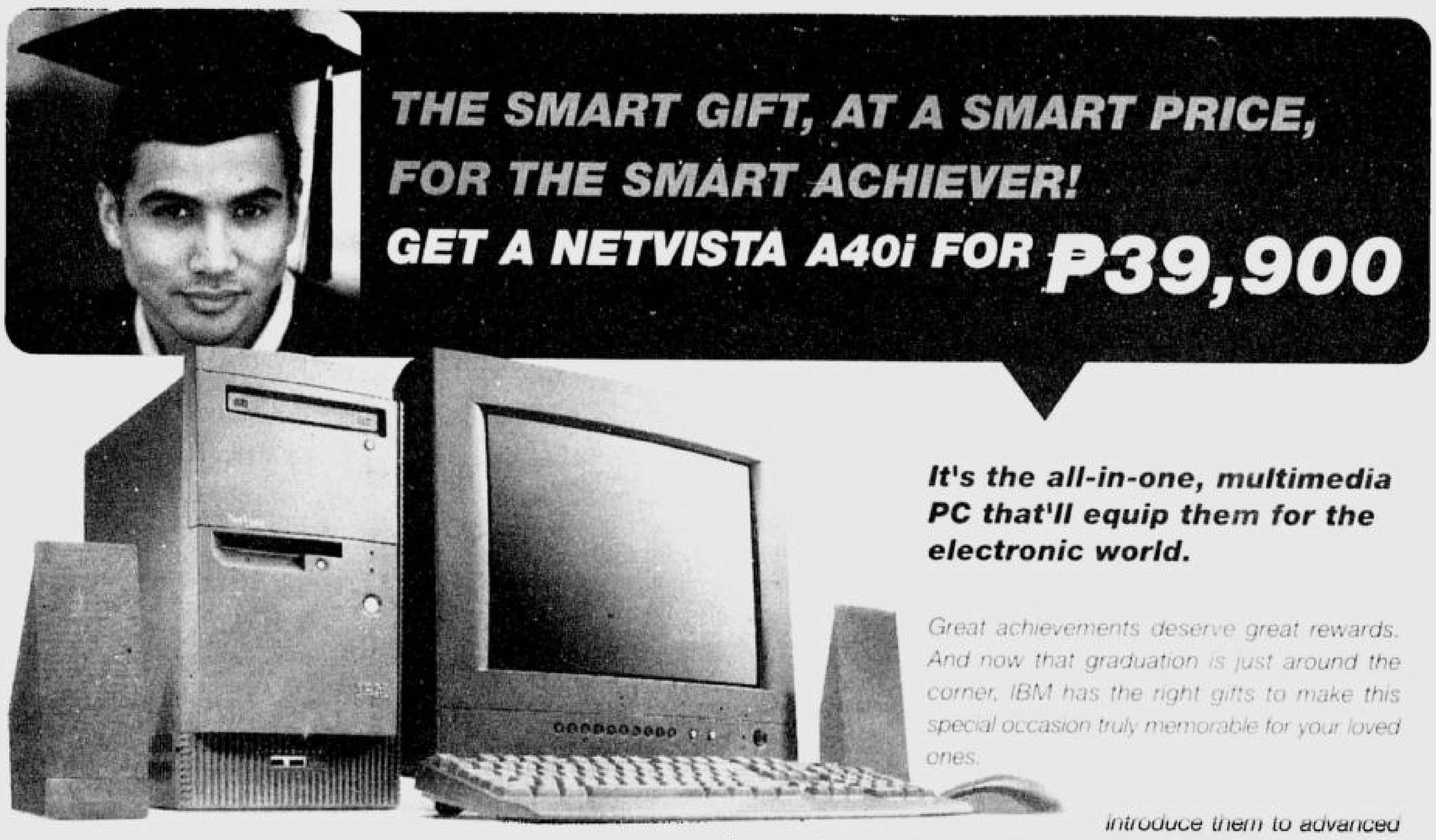

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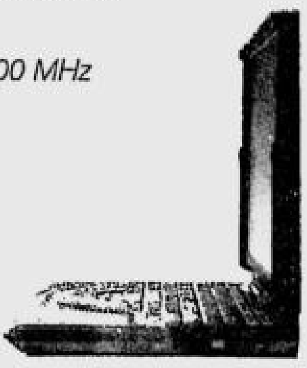

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Japan economy expanded 0.7% in Q4 last year

TOKYO—Japan's economy grew 0.7 percent in the October-December quarter and remained on target to achieve its fiscal year growth forecast, the government said Wednesday.

The gross domestic product data were revised from a preliminary announcement in March of a 0.8-percent growth. The overall revision was made due to a 0.1-point downward revisions in net exports and capital spending for the period, the Cabinet Office, which released the data, said.

Japan would be able to achieve its 1.2-percent growth target for the fiscal year ended March 31 even if the January-March quarter showed a 0.3-percent contraction, the Cabinet Office said.

Gross domestic product is the value of all goods and services a country produces.

The latest quarterly growth figure translates into an annualized growth of 3 percent and follows a 0.6-percent contraction in the July-September quarter and a 0.2-percent growth in the April-June period.

Japan is struggling to emerge from a stubborn economic slump, its longest since the end of World War II, amid strong deflationary pressures in an economy where consumers have grown reluctant to spend.

Overall GDP in the period was hurt by a 0.4-point decline in net exports as import growth strongly outpaced exports. Imports grew 5.1 percent while exports rose 0.8 percent. The preliminary data had shown net exports falling 0.3 point. *AP*

US consumer confidence drops in April

NEW YORK—A sharp decline in consumer confidence in April shows Americans are increasingly troubled about jobs and the current economy, worries that may not be easily erased by a recent cut in interest rates, analysts say.

The New York-based Conference Board said Tuesday its consumer confidence index fell to 109.2 in April, down from a revised 116.9 in March. The board's survey of consumers was completed before the Federal Reserve unexpectedly cut interest rates for the fourth time this year.

But economists played down the importance of the survey's timing, noting that much of the April drop reflected consumers' souring assessment of present day business conditions and job prospects, a mindset less likely to be reshaped by a Fed move.

While the overall confidence index has declined for most of the past year, the drop-off has largely reflected pessimism in consumers' longer-term economic outlook. Their assessments of current business conditions and job prospects had remained strong—until April.

"This plunge is a significant turn for the worse, to my way of thinking, because what it's saying to me is that the cumulative effect of layoffs and rising energy prices is now really reaching into people's pocketbooks," said David Orr, chief economist for First Union Corp. in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Orr said such immediate concerns would not be eased by a cut in interest rates, an assessment seconded by Lynn Franco, director of the Conference Board's Consumer Research Center. A similar surprise rate cut in January had little effect on consumer confidence figures for the following month, Franco said. *AP*

US leads most competitive countries

LAUSANNE, Switzerland—The United States followed by Singapore and Finland lead an annual table of the world's most competitive countries released Wednesday by a top management institute.

The top three were unchanged from last year.

Next came Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, Ireland, Sweden, Canada and Switzerland, said the report by the International Institute for Management Development.

The United States has led the list of 49 countries since it was first compiled 13 years ago.

Countries were classified according to a battery of 280 criteria, including exchange rates, gross domestic product per capita, economic performance, and government and corporate efficiency.

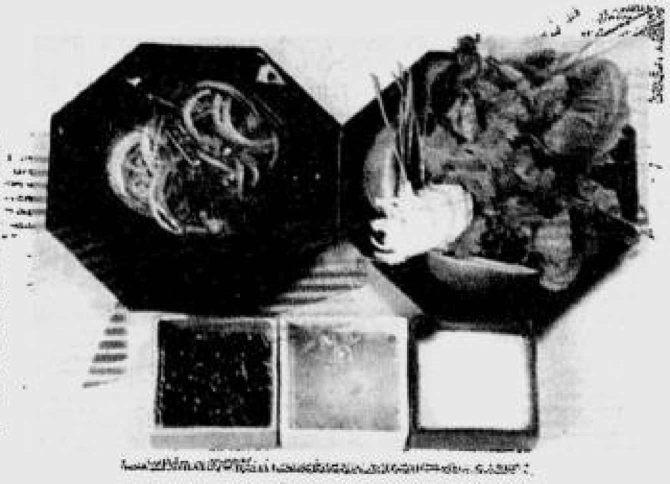
In the table, an unprecedented 42 of the 49 countries studied had GDP growth of at least 3.0 percent in 2000.

Only Argentina registered an economic contraction, of 0.5 percent, among the 49 countries, which were chosen because of the reliability of their financial statistics.

Japan, which has the world's second biggest economy, came in 26th on the competitiveness table, just behind France. *AFP*

LIFESTYLE
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

A taste of paradise



FRESH. A diner has a wide range of leaves and condiments to choose from to spice up the *pho* soup.

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

FILIPINOS can't seem to get enough of Vietnam these days. After catching a glimpse of hell on earth in the musical "Miss Saigon," they can now savor a taste of heaven in Thien Duong, the first Vietnamese restaurant to open in a five-star hotel in Makati.

Thien Duong, the most recent addition to Dusit Hotel Nikko's fine dining outlets, has opened where the Shark's Fin restaurant used to be. Nikko belongs to the Bangkok-based Dusit Thani hotel chain, and houses other restaurants such as Benkay, Ciao and Benjarong.

A TASTE/ p.C3

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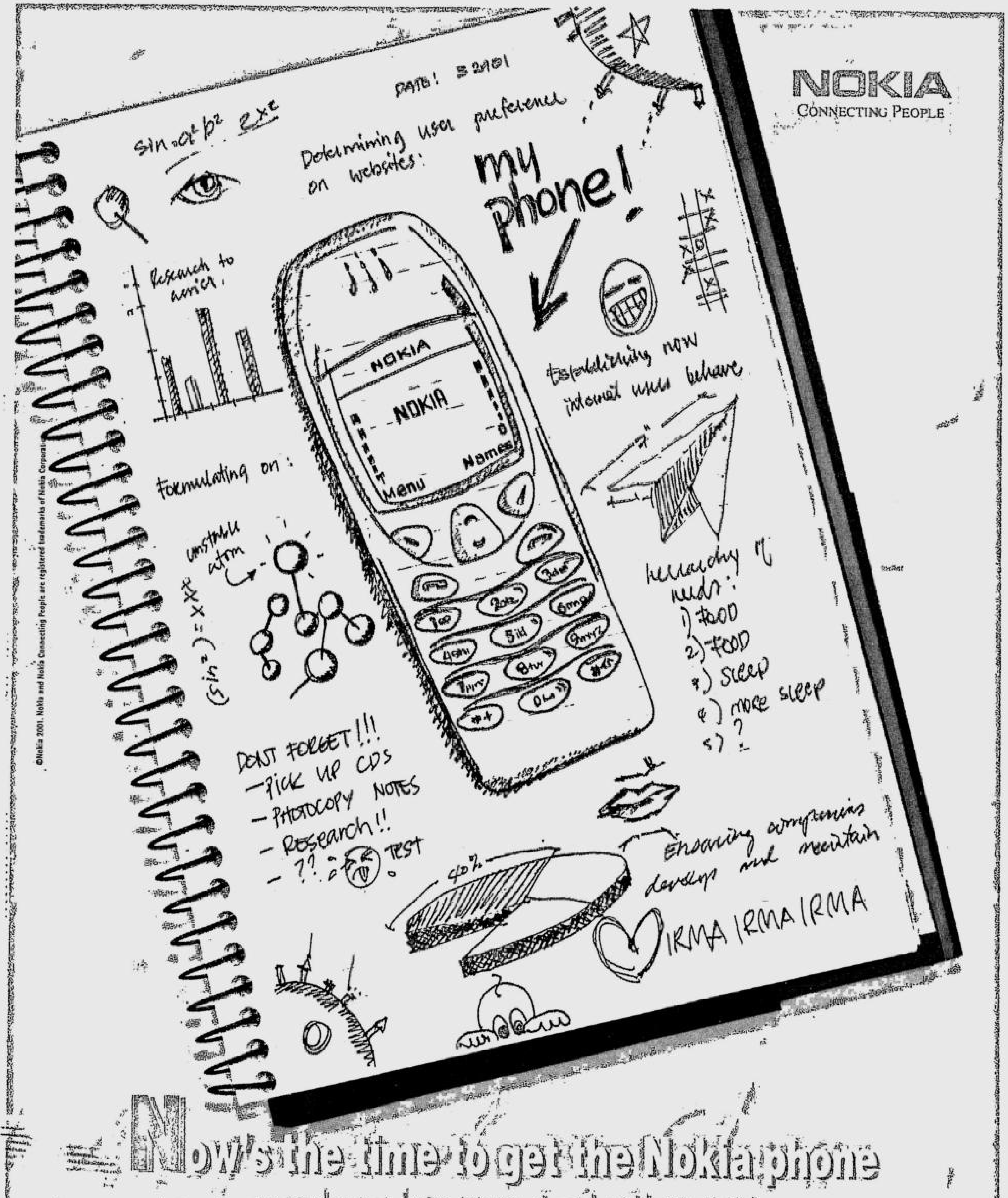
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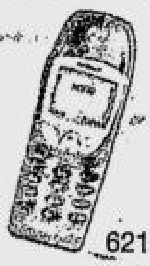
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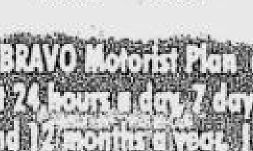
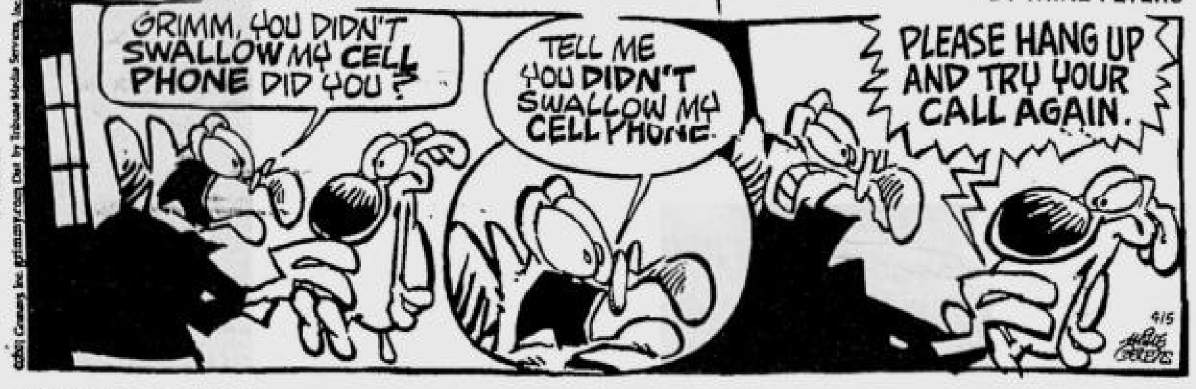


BRAVO For Life

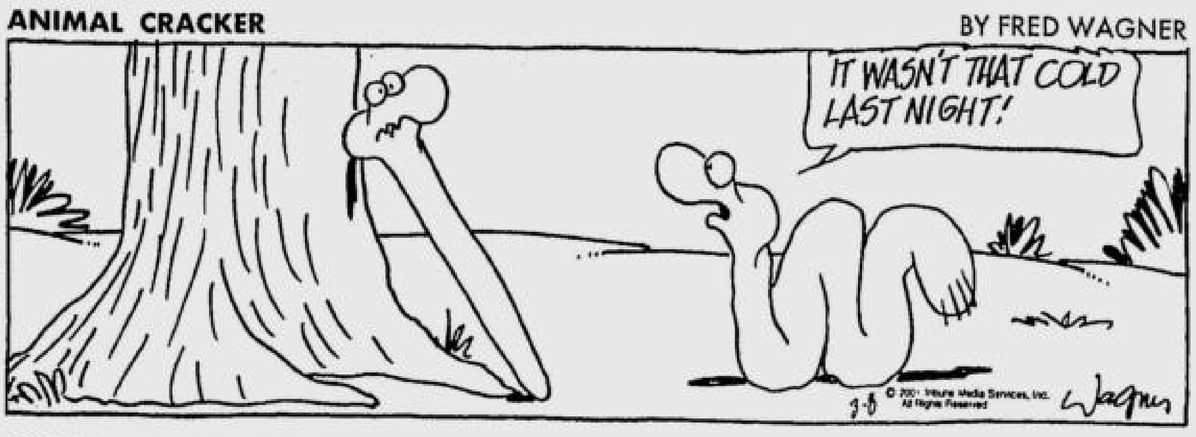
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GRIMM, YOU DIDN'T SWALLOW MY CELL PHONE DID YOU?
TELL ME YOU DIDN'T SWALLOW MY CELL PHONE.
PLEASE HANG UP AND TRY YOUR CALL AGAIN.
4/15

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


IT WASN'T THAT COLD LAST NIGHT!
3-8
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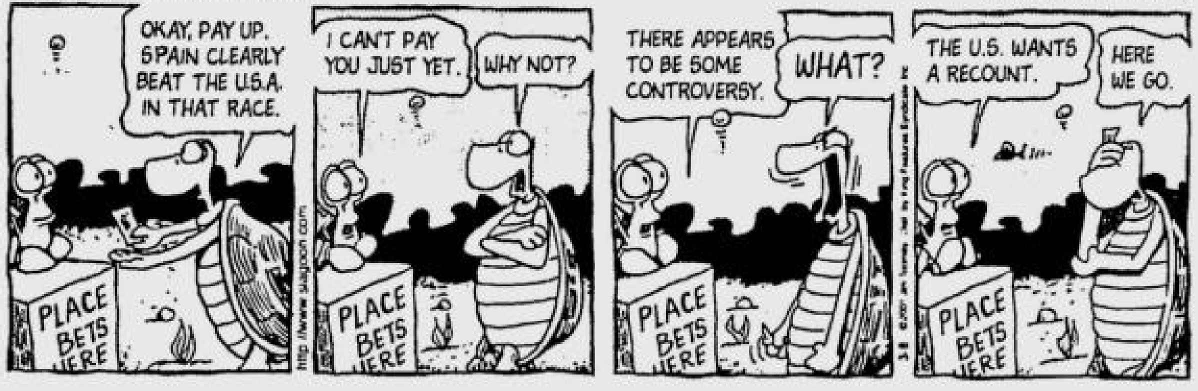
Wagner

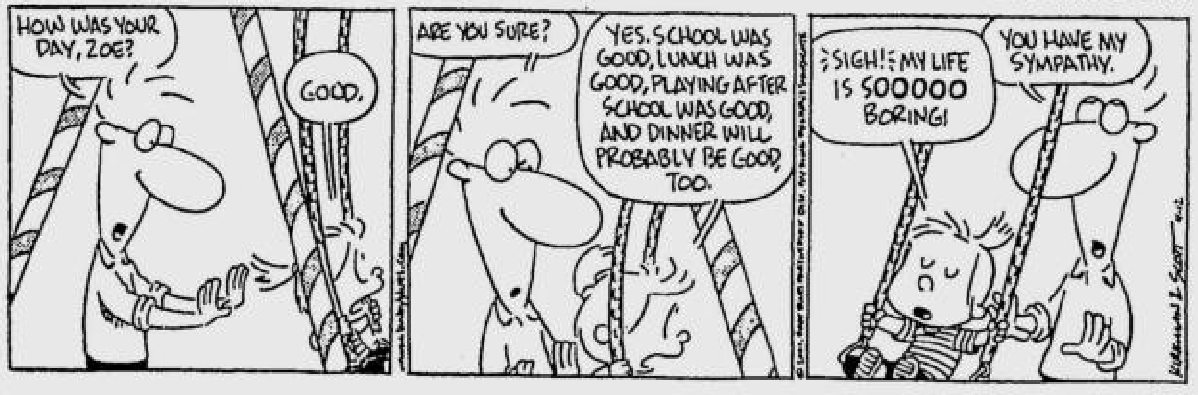
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


OKAY, PAY UP. SPAIN CLEARLY BEAT THE U.S.A. IN THAT RACE.
PLACE BETS HERE
I CAN'T PAY YOU JUST YET.
WHY NOT?
http://www.slagoon.com
THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME CONTROVERSY.
WHAT?
THE U.S. WANTS A RECOUNT.
HERE WE GO.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW WAS YOUR DAY, ZOE?
GOOD.
ARE YOU SURE?
YES. SCHOOL WAS GOOD, LUNCH WAS GOOD, PLAYING AFTER SCHOOL WAS GOOD, AND DINNER WILL PROBABLY BE GOOD, TOO.
SIGH! MY LIFE IS SOOOOO BORING!
YOU HAVE MY SYMPATHY.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Carol Burnett, I.M. Pei, Bobby Rydell, Jordana Brewster, Jet Li, Joan Chen

Happy Birthday: You will have to back up and slow down if you want to make wise choices this year. You have a tendency to take on way too much and fall short of your goals. If you are on top of your game and willing to ask for help or delegate some of the work to others, you will find yourself much further ahead. Rely on those who love you to pick up the slack. Your numbers: 8, 13, 15, 22, 27, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Hard work will pay off. Travel will lead you down new and exciting avenues. Keep an open mind and don't be afraid to pursue unfamiliar territory. If you miss out. You'll have only yourself to blame.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): It's time you got serious about your professional goals. Make career changes if necessary or consider starting your own small business. You will be able to get the help you need.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You are vacillating and confusing everyone around you. You need to get your feet back on the ground and come up with some concrete answers to offset the problems you face.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A secret affair would lead to your demise. You will not be able to avoid rumors, and you can be sure that they will affect your reputation professionally and personally.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You must stabilize your partnerships if you want to move into a leadership position. Overindulgence must be controlled. Make sure that your motives regarding your generosity are ethical.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Do something creative. You need to focus on activities that will stop you from worrying about your personal life. If you confront your problems, arguments and estrangement will follow.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Stick to your objectives. Make the changes necessary to complete all your projects. You can make positive changes to enhance your looks.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will have difficulties with family members if you refuse to do things their way. Your all-or-nothing attitude may cost you dearly this time. Consider the outcome before you say no.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Misunderstandings will lead to tension with the one you love. Communicate openly and honestly before the situation gets out of control. You need to pay more attention to each other.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Get your colleagues to pitch in to finish an important job. This is not the time to disagree with your boss or to consider making a career move. Sit tight for the time being.

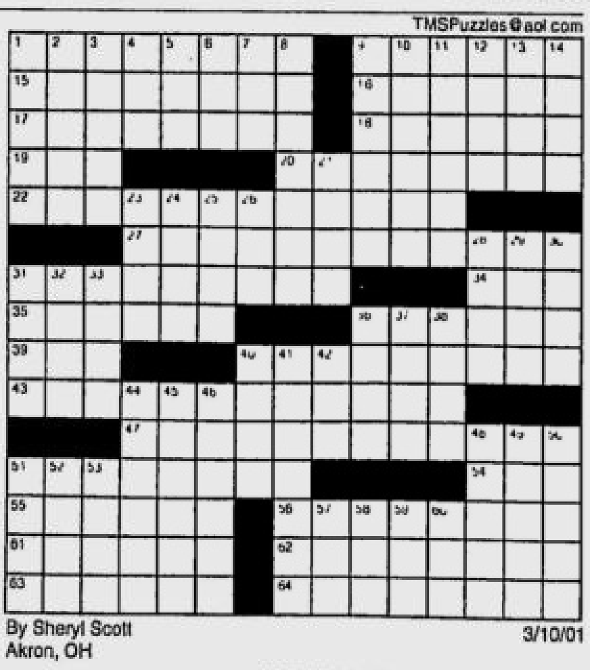
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You need to get out and enjoy yourself. Travel, social events or following a creative dream will all help to take your mind off your work and your worries. You deserve a little pampering.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't expect the people you live with to understand what you're going through. Make plans to get out and enjoy yourself with individuals who have the same interests.

Birthday Baby: You've got grace, charm and the ability to talk your way in or out of anything. You are a born diplomat and an eager participant. You have a strong will and the stamina to reach your goals.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Sheryl Scott
Akron, OH

3/10/01

ACROSS
1 Devious plotters
9 Four pecks
15 Heart-to-heart talk?
16 Additional performance
17 "__ Eighty-Four"
18 Ron Howard film, "__ 13"
19 Sci-fi craft
20 Isolates
22 Elongated
27 Meteor
31 Superlatively resentful
34 Bauxite or galena
35 Expunged
36 Handbook
39 Morning hrs.
40 Learned
43 Misdirects anger at
47 Stiff blocks on the gridiron
51 Pre-election period
54 Be under the weather
55 Overthrows
56 Outward indication
61 Put back in the granary
62 Source of agar
63 Likes and dislikes
64 Most unemotional

DOWN
1 Skull cavity
2 Montgomery of "Judgment at Nuremberg"
3 Peer recognition
4 12/24 or 12/31
5 Got together
6 Heart of a hurricane
7 Fish eggs
8 Days' ends
9 Lighthouse
10 Disconnect
11 Pathfinders
12 Place for cargo
13 __ Stanley Gardner
14 Tolstoy and Gorcey
21 Cut and splice
23 Superlative endings
24 You, to a Quaker
25 Classic car of the 1930s
26 Soil turner
28 Junket
29 Sea east of the Caspian
30 Count (on)
31 Rhythm
32 Shirley MacLaine movie, "__ la Douce"
33 Tedious undertaking
36 Closet eater?
37 Oodles
38 1880 Emile Zola novel
40 Party for guys only
41 Word makers
42 Embrace
44 __ de corps
45 Principal commodity
46 Garden blossoms
48 Extent
49 Aluminum silicates
50 Fall as ice
51 Brusque
52 On the briny
53 No __, no fuss
57 Old pro
58 Chapel vow
59 Actor Duryea
60 Samuel's mentor

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	C	A	B	S	■	R	A	T	A	■	I	L	K	A
A	L	L	A	H	■	E	P	E	E	■	S	O	I	L
C	A	I	R	O	■	S	E	E	R	■	O	R	E	O
■	M	A	N	D	O	E	S	N	O	T	L	I	V	E
■	■	■	■	D	D	E	■	■	S	I	D	■	■	■
B	Y	B	R	E	A	D	A	L	O	N	E	H	L	■
R	E	R	U	N	S	■	D	A	L	E	■	E	L	K
I	M	A	M	■	■	A	I	M	■	■	A	N	T	I
T	E	C	■	M	A	L	E	■	S	H	A	R	O	N
■	N	E	E	D	S	B	U	T	T	E	R	I	N	G
■	■	■	R	I	P	■	■	R	O	E	■	■	■	■
U	P	O	N	C	E	I	N	A	W	H	I	L	E	■
H	I	V	E	■	R	O	O	M	■	A	D	O	R	E
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H	A	R	T	■	E	A	R	S	■	S	A	L	E	S

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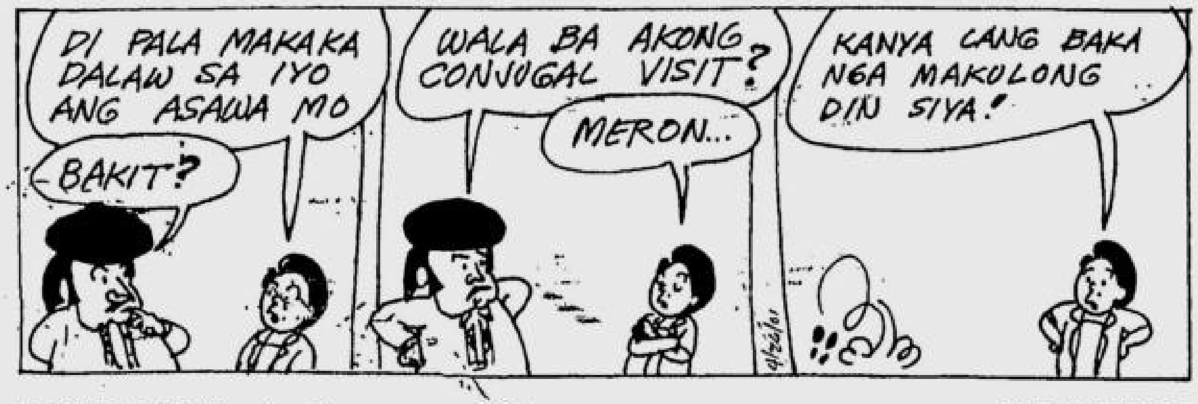
3/10/01

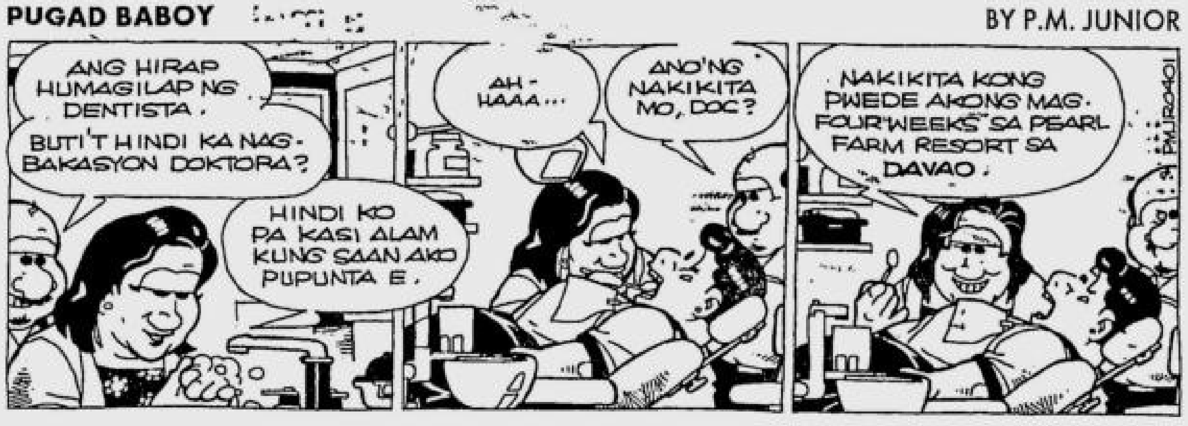
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DI PALA MAKAKA DALAW SA IYO ANG ASAWA MO
BAKIT?
WALA BA AKONG CONJUGAL VISIT?
MERON...
KANYA LANG BAKA NGA MAKULONG DIN SIYA!

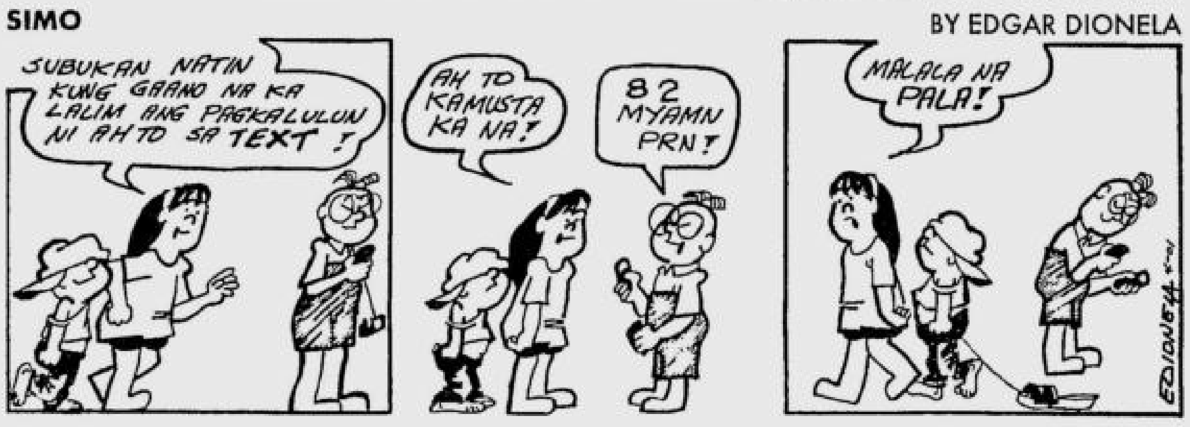
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG HIRAP HUMAGILAP NG DENTISTA.
BUTI'T HINDI KA NAG-BAKASYON DOKTORA?
HINDI KO PA KASI ALAM KUNG SAAN AKO PUPUNTA E.
AH-HAAA...
ANO'NG NAKIKITA MO, DOC?
NAKIKITA KONG PWEDE AKONG MAG-FOUR WEEKS SA PEARL FARM RESORT SA DAVAO.
PMJR0401

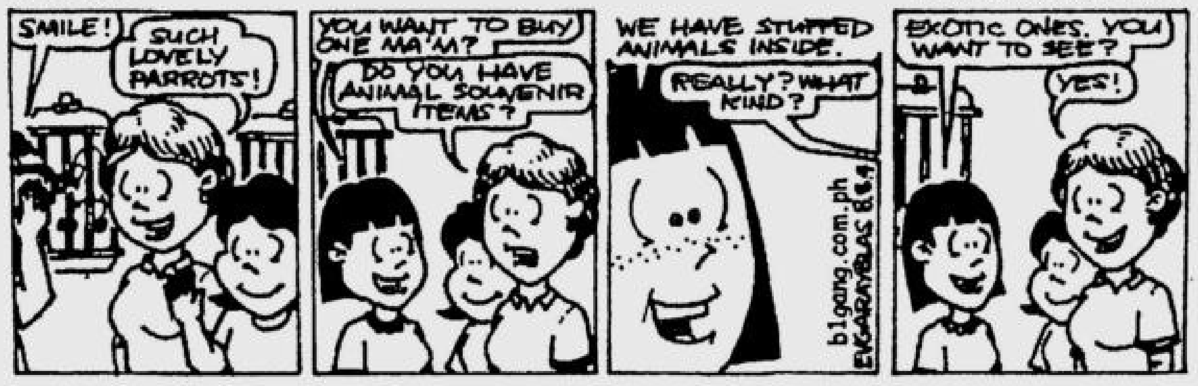
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SUBUKAN NATIN KUNG GAANO NA KA LALIM ANG PAGKALULON NI AH TO SA TEXT!
AH TO KAMUSTA KA NA?
8 2 MYAMN PRN?
MALALA NA PALA!
EDIONELA

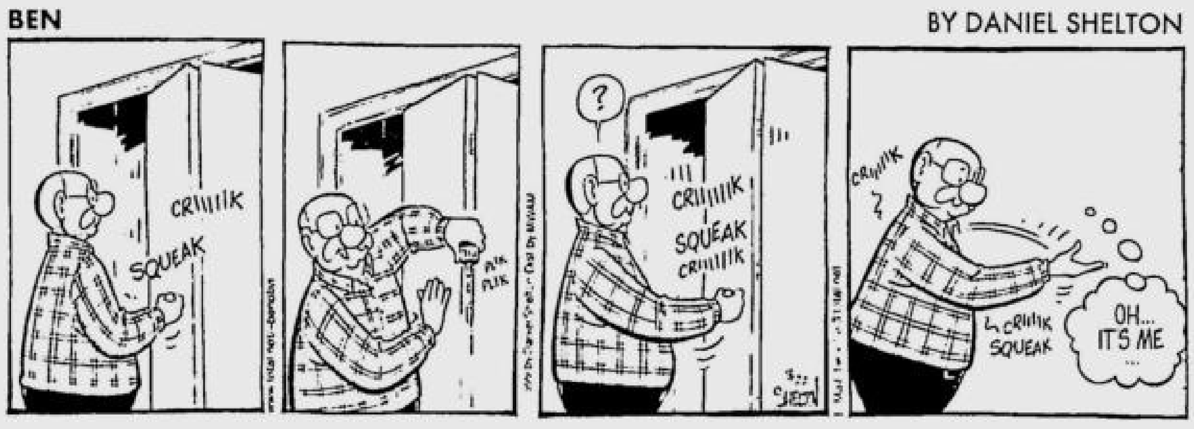
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SMILE!
SUCH LOVELY PARROTS!
YOU WANT TO BUY ONE MA'M?
DO YOU HAVE ANIMAL SOUVENIR ITEMS?
WE HAVE STUFFED ANIMALS INSIDE.
REALLY? WHAT KIND?
b1gang.com.ph
EVGARAYBLAS 8.6.4
EXOTIC ONES. YOU WANT TO SEE?
YES!

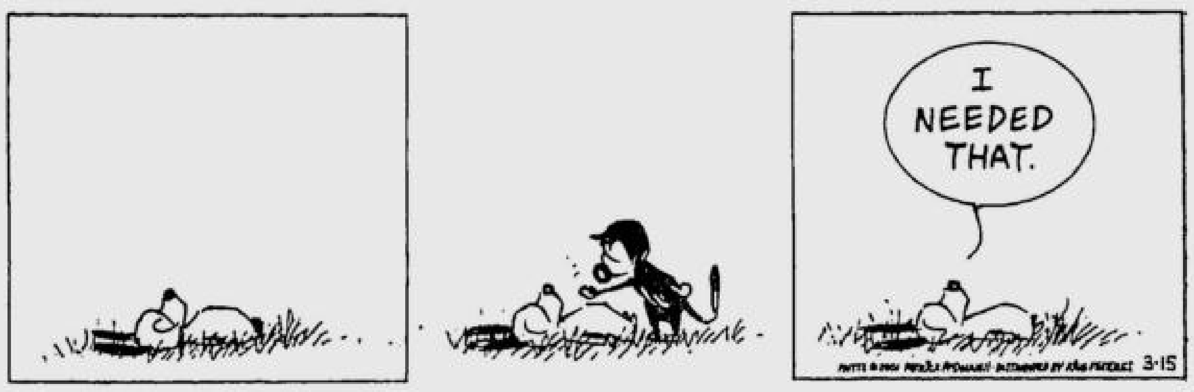
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


CRIIIIIK
SQUEAK
FLIK FLIK
?
CRIIIIIK
SQUEAK
CRIIIIIK
CRIIIIK
CRIIIIK
SQUEAK
OH... IT'S ME
SHELTON

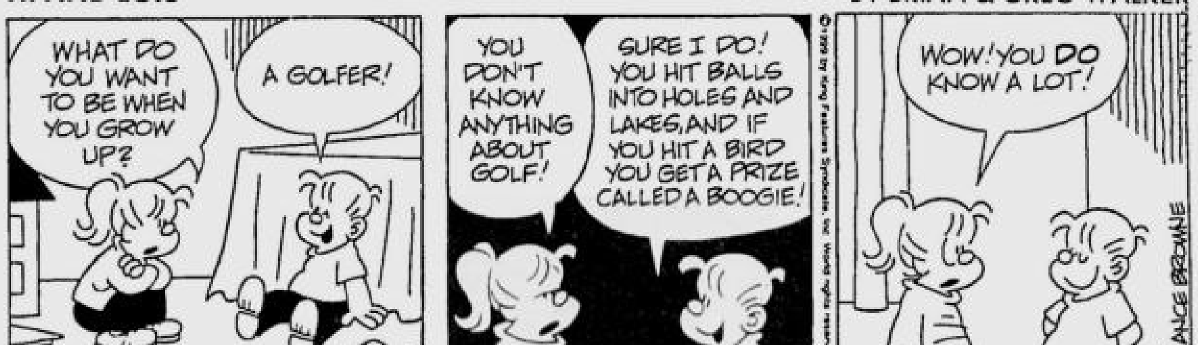
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I NEEDED THAT.
3-15

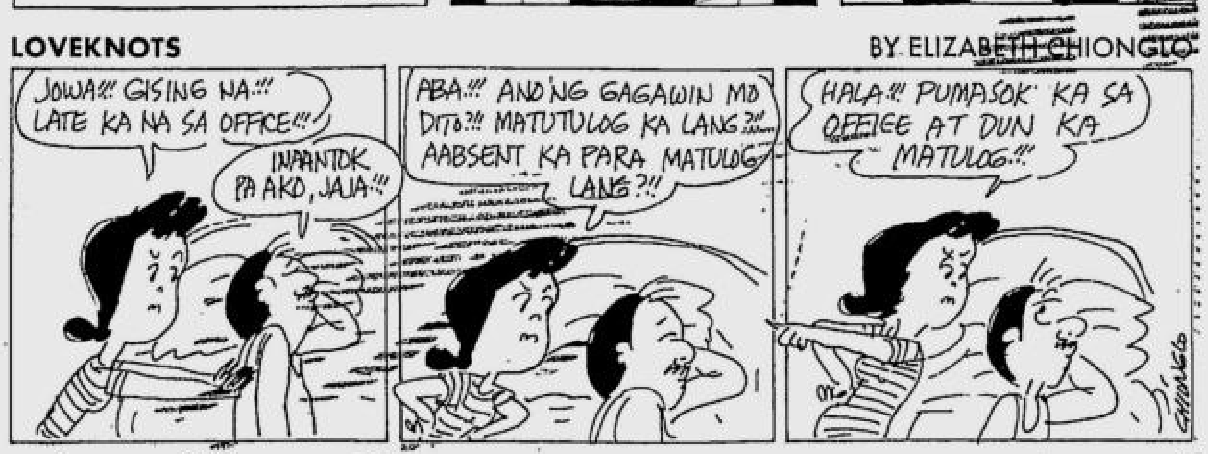
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?
A GOLFER!
YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT GOLF!
SURE I DO! YOU HIT BALLS INTO HOLES AND LAKES, AND IF YOU HIT A BIRD YOU GET A PRIZE CALLED A BOOGIE!
3-11
WOW! YOU DO KNOW A LOT!
CHANCE BROWNE

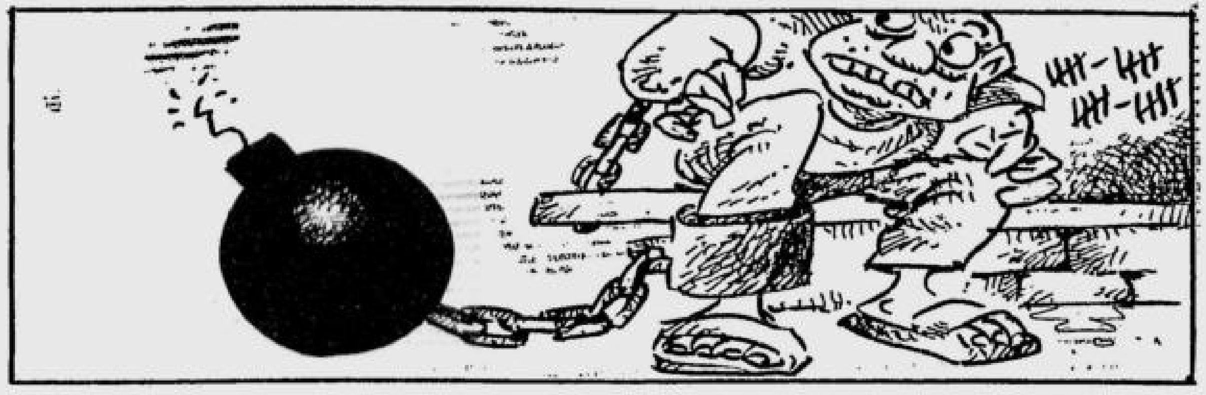
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA!!! GISING NA!!! LATE KA NA SA OFFICE!!!
INAANTOK PA AKO, JAJA!!!
ABA!!! ANO'NG GAGAWIN MO DITO?!! MATUTULOG KA LANG?!!! AABSENT KA PARA MATULOG LANG?!!
HALA!!! PUMASOK KA SA OFFICE AT DUN KA MATULOG!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



NO CENTERPIECE. A potful of carrot and radish sticks, mint and basil leaves go well with the spring rolls and Vietnamese pickles.

The distinct flavors of Vietnamese food are brought out by a melange of fresh leaves and grass plus the obligatory 'sawsawan'

A taste of paradise

(From page C1)

By coincidence, Thien Duong means paradise in Vietnamese, while Dusit Thani means a town in heaven in Thai.

Thien Duong has been one of the top fine dining restaurants in Bangkok for 12 years now. "Many Filipino gourmands who travel often to Bangkok know Thien Duong," says Sandra Garcia, Dusit Hotel Nikko's director for marketing. "They're all excited about this recent development."

Healthy eating

The growing trend toward healthy eating has a lot to do with the food's popularity, says Siri-orn Aramvit, Thien Duong's manager in Bangkok. She and Chef Buarong Utaida, also a Thai, are here to train their Filipino colleagues in the art of Vietnamese cooking.

Unlike greasy Chinese cuisine, Vietnamese dishes are mostly boiled, grilled or eaten fresh. Aside from the abundant use of fresh vegetables and spices, the menu is rich in fish and seafood since Vietnam, like the Philippines, is blessed with a long coastline teeming with rich marine life.

Filipinos led by Chef Dave Laureano, restaurant manager Dina Ortega and assistant restaurant manager Arlyn Reyes have had to go to Bangkok and experience the various nuances of Vietnamese cooking. "It's totally different from Thai food," says Ortega, "from the aroma to the taste to the manner of preparation."

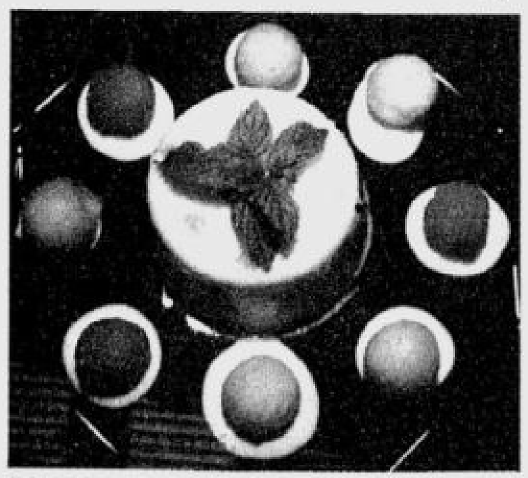
For one, most Vietnamese dishes aren't as spicy as Thai cuisine. Diners can control the amount of spices they want to add to their food because each flavoring is placed in a separate container.

The Vietnamese hardly use coconut milk the way Thais and Bicolanos do. Because they use less oil in their cooking, their dishes are decidedly less greasy, lighter on the head and easier on the stomach.

The food's distinct flavors are brought out by a melange of fresh mint and basil leaves, coriander, lemon grass, lettuce, a slice or two of lemon and a dash of *nuoc mam—nampla* to Thais or plain *patis* to Filipinos.

Their version of the *atchara* combines shreds of radish and carrots pickled in rice vinegar and flavored by *nuoc mam*. Bits and pieces of red-hot *labuyo* are optional.

Like most Filipinos, the Vietnamese seem most happy dipping bits of food in a particular *sawsawan*. Dishes also come with several table seasonings, including separate square containers for chili powder and, believe it or not, refined sugar. They go well with *pho*, a clear soup of rice noodles and chunks of beef boiled with onions and sprinkled with cilantro and mint leaves for that added tang.



LONGAN pudding

CHEFS Dave Laureano and Buarong Utaida

Each serving comes with a heaping plate of garnishing—lettuce, onion tops, lemon slices, more mint, cilantro and raw onions. Use them to your taste bud's desire. The chef, we assure you, won't mind. "We allow the food's natural flavors to surface by putting a dash of herbs and spices," says Laureano. "It's up to the diner—whatever suits his taste."

Leaves and grass

Vietnamese dining is also a totally different experience. Chopsticks are still the preferred table utensils, but for dishes such as the *bi goi cua cuon*, eating with one's hands is a must.

The fresh spring rolls are stuffed with minced pork, shrimp and crab and rolled in translucent rice wrappers and garnished with strips of red cabbage and carrots. To further bring out the flavor, each spring roll is cut into smaller pieces and wrapped in lettuce and garnished with carrot and radish sticks, Vietnamese pickles, mint and basil leaves. Of course, this is best done by hand.

Haven't had enough of that minty sensation? There's a potfull of raw mint leaves on stand by, don't worry, apart from limitless servings of Vietnamese pickles.

The sole fish, scraped, rolled into flour and deep-fried, is served on its own crisp skin. Again, it can be made more flavorful if dipped in lemon grass sauce—a dark brown concoction of tamarind, coriander, ginger and, of course, lemon grass.

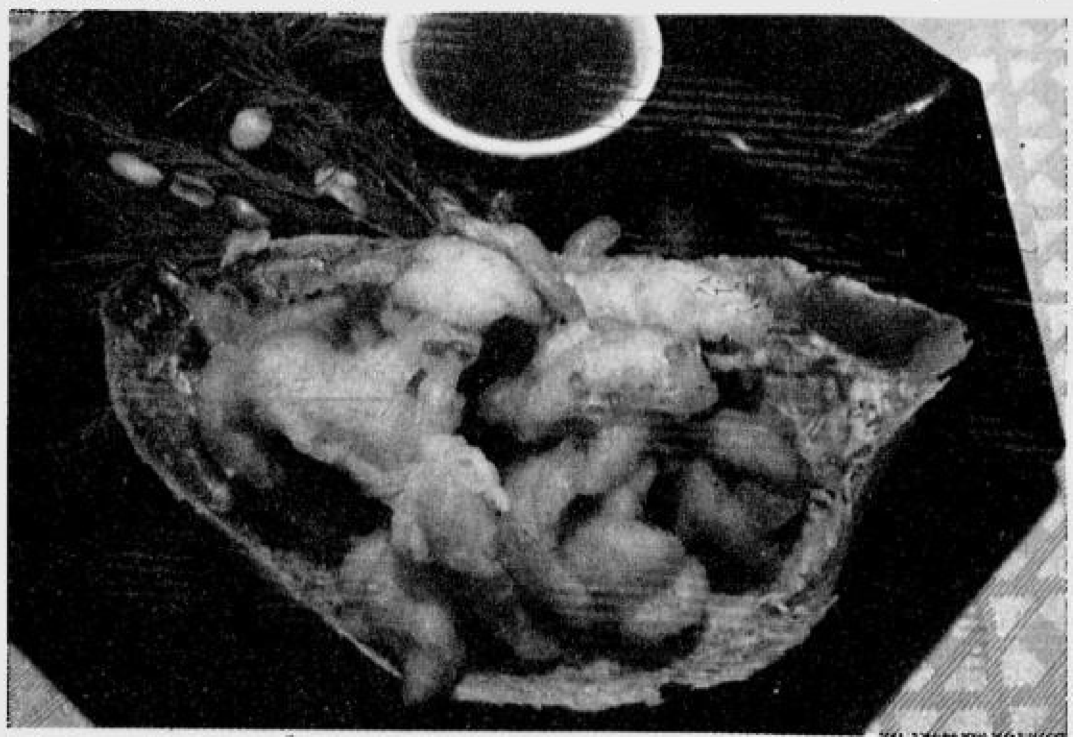
Ga nep is a complete meal in itself. Several pieces of reddish-brown chicken are marinated, charcoal-grilled and served with rounded pieces of glutinous rice, *carioca*-style. The chicken meat is best dipped in light vinegar sprinkled with sesame seeds.

Like a Chinese restaurant, Thien Duong serves its dishes lauriat-style. *Com sen*, Vietnam's idea of fried rice topped with pieces of prawns and mixed with diced chicken and asparagus, is wrapped in lotus leaf. "I never imagined using lotus leaves for cooking," says Ortega. "We will be sourcing most of our ingredients locally and from Thailand."

Com sen is such a feast for the gastronomic senses we barely had room for the rice meal and longan pudding.

But unlike a seven-course Chinese dinner, we were able to go beyond the soup and appetizer without feeling stuffed. And nobody grabbed an ice-cold glass of water in the midst of dinner to soothe a burning tongue, which usually happens when dining the Thai way.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



CA chien xa—deep-fried sole fish with dill, toasted peanuts and spicy lemon-grass dip

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CASTLE ROCK (4pm - 6pm)
A sand castle building challenge
Sand lantern contest (6pm - 9pm)
ACoUsTIC JaM
by red horse beer (9pm onwards)

April 27, 2001
PaSSIon 4 FaShIoN by JAG (6pm)
THe GrInD (9pm onwards)
A Rave Party... Techno, Garage, Hard House, Drum n' Bass, Hip-Hop
Featuring DJ OUCH & DJ MKY

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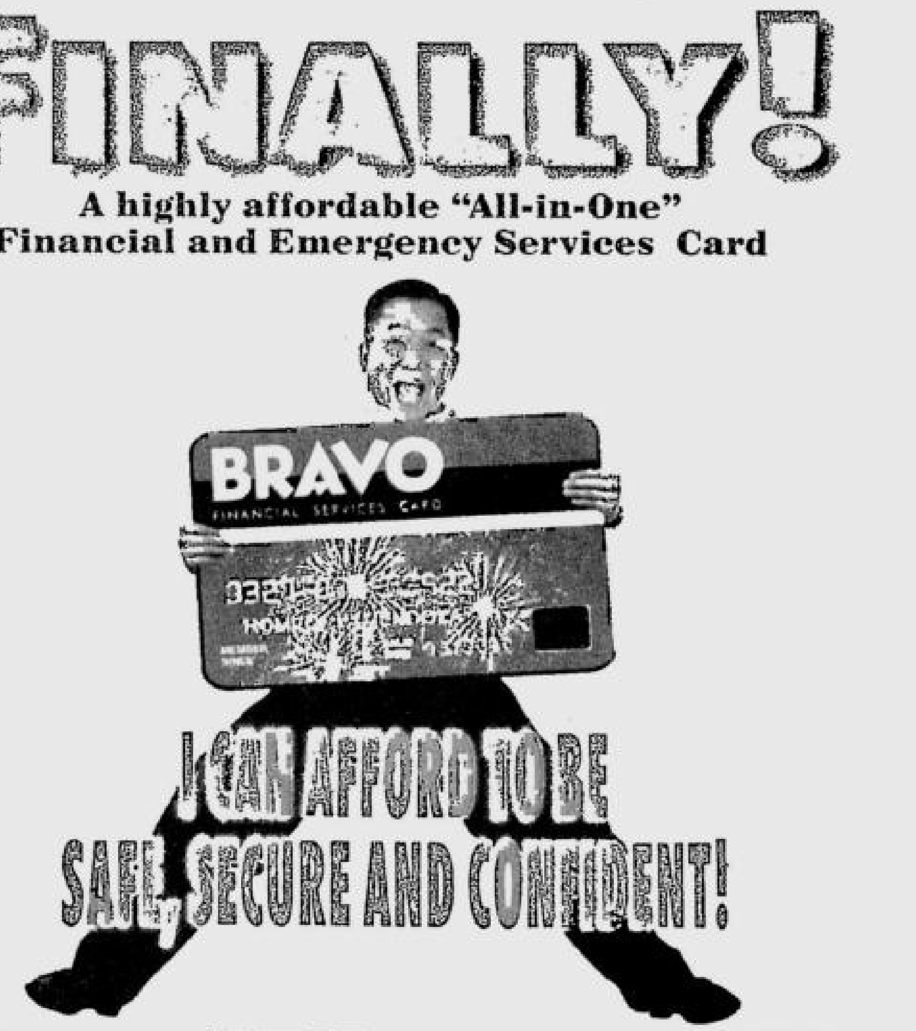

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Fear of empty spaces illustrated in buffets

In any buffet, the worst scenario is finding your plate a wild mix. But the best is eating what you really like

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

WHEN this column reappeared after I had been in the hospital for two-and-a-half months, and in convalescence for another month, friends asked me how I managed. Simple, I did what others do: Delegated research assistants with good palates to eat the food, check out the place and give me a report (a one-page sheet of instructions from me in hand). I supplement this with interviews (restaurant owners, chefs, diners), menus, photographs, more research, and build a review from there.

Conway's at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel at Ayala Center, Makati (tel. 813-8888) was checked out for me by my nephew Jimmy Besa, a graphic artist who is a hefty 6'1". His report is so charming and disarming that I reproduced most of it here:

"Lito [my companion who makes Ed Quimson look malnourished] and I made it a point to sample most of the food, except for the pasta buffet. The first thing that strikes you about the buffet arrangement is the multilevel platforms on which the plates rested, which I found quite creative. Truthfully, we expected more quality from a five-star hotel outlet. Here are the dishes that stood out:

- Blackened catfish with saffron sauce. I am not an avid fish eater, but this dish went down easy without a fishy taste, thanks to the tangy sauce.
- Potato Leek Soup, which warmed me up pleasantly inside with its thick, full taste.
- US Prime Rib: My bailiwick. It's a succulent medium-well, with a choice of three types of mustard.
- Pork Loin in red wine sauce: Tender and perky, thanks to its sauce. Another haven for carnivores, with a twist.

"The rest of the buffet which we sampled: Lamb in curry [too spicy]; salad bar with choices of garden lettuce as well as French, Italian, Thousand Island and Caesar Salad dressings, pork barbecue, smoked salmon, marinated chicken, fish and seafood salads, baked/mashed potatoes, gratinated artichokes and smoked salmon. We failed to try the pasta buffet for lack of space.

"Conway's also has a Juice Buffet with [drum roll] three choices of [watery] fruit juice: mango, melon and orange—all for a measly P200++ per head. The dessert table had the token sliced fruit and cream-filled treats, but what caught our fancy were the Tiramisu and Apple Strudel with Cream, which gave us both a much-needed saccharine rush. Loved it.

"The service was, unfortunately, a nightmare. The sullen-looking waitress showed us to our table at the very back of the room. When I requested a table closer to the buffet, all I got was "*Wala na, eh.*" Our unhappy-looking violet glass water goblets were filled exactly an hour into our meal, when we were practically through eating [thank heaven for the juice buffet].

"Conway's is a music bar by night, which explains the low tabletops. Sadly, this made eating unwieldy, especially for Lito and myself, who had to bend forward, appearing to bow to each other with every bite. The atmosphere was ho-hum—just the hum of the air-conditioner, and the lunchtime chat of foreign guests and Makati office people. As for the décor, the dark rattan chairs [which Lito found uncomfortable, due mainly to his size], glass tabletops, driftwood centerpiece and modern concrete columns seemed better suited for Conway's nocturnal role than for lunch.

"Conway's is a place to eat, but not to enjoy eating. The food was satisfying, but not enough to make up for its lack of atmosphere, or to make it a gastronome's destination. Obviously a lot of thought went into the planning of the menu, especially the pasta buffet. Too bad the environment did not get the same attention."

The pasta buffet I found to have charm and potential. To mix and match are rigatoni, spaghetti, penne, linguini and angeli with the following sauces: Classic tomato, beef Bolognaise, carbonara and traditional pesto. On the specialty pasta list march: Spaghettini tossed in tomato tarragon sauce with juliennes of Norwegian smoked salmon; angel hair with salami Milano, fresh vine-ripened tomato sauce and spring garlic; spicy spaghetti flavored with fresh coriander and Mexican style roast chicken; and finally penne with squid and prawns in *uni* and crab roe sauce. A full serving, with soup and salad is offered for P470++.

Although a buffet specialist, Conway's does have an à la carte menu. Witness: Steamed Chinese Pao with a morrel and chicken filling, served with lime; Minced Lobster and Seafood Lollipops; Oven-Baked Filo Purse with Chinese mushrooms, Char Siew and Mediterranean spices, served with Chinese red vinegar; Cheese Ole Fritters with tomato salsa or mint raita; Soulfood Seafood Sushi; Ragtime Chikallenos, tandoori spiced roast chicken in flour tortilla on *guacamole* and hoisin sauce; Land of the Rising Sun chicken and leek skewers with ginger and cilantro dip; Heavy Metal Sizzling Spicy Prawns Filipino style ("rocked with herb croutons and achara"); Pinoy Adobo Hotdog served in *pan de sal*, flavored with baby garlic.

As some Ateneo students wrote in an undergrad thesis, Filipino buffets illustrate *horror vacui*, the fear of empty spaces. And so most have wide assortments that diners are eager to sample. The worst scenario is finding your plate a wild mix. The best is eating what you really like, leaving out what does not appeal to you, suit the moment, or thrill you. Thus it could even make your day.

CONWAY'S lunch buffet menu

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Easy Baking: Daisy Biscuits, Marbled Pizza, Flower Buns, Painted Cookies, Betty Crocker Bownie Bar ala Mode

Batch 4: May 17 & 18 (Th-Fri) 8:30-12 nn.
P1,200
Cook Your Own Meal: Finger Lickin Ribs, Crunchy Salad, Bacon and Beans Risotto, Fruit & Mallow Jelly.

Bake Like Mom: Double Choco Muffins, Cheese Pie. Chicken Turnover. Turtle Bread Surprise, Betty Crocker Muffins.

Young Peoples' Cook-In for teeners:
Batch 2. May 2, 3, & 4 (W-F) 1:30 – 5 p.m.
P1,500.00
Japanese Cooking: Sushi Making, Tamagoyaki, Japanese Clear Soup, Tofu Lychee Desserts, Seafood Shabu-Shabu, Tea [illegible], Japanese Bento Box, Simple Garnishing.

Batch 3: May 12, & 19 (Sat) 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
P1,500
Easy-Fix Meals: Easy Spanish Paella, Crispy Fish Almondine, Caesar Salad, Broken Glass Jello Bonus: Pandan-Iced Tea Cooler

Let's Go Party! Coleslaw Salad, Crunchy Bite Chicken Lollipop, Spinach Fettucini with Carbonara, Individual Baked Alaska, Betty Crocker Easy Chocolate Beehives. Bonus: Pink Lady Surprise.

ONE-DAY SPECIALS (ADULTS)

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Chinese Cooking: May 4 (Fri) 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Nido Soup, Pata Tim, Fried and Steamed Siomai, Chinese Lumpia-Chinese Dumpling, Fried Noodles.
P750

Catering: May 5 (Sat) 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Portion control, costing inventory, table layout, equipment sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes such as Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All-Meat Paella, 3 types of fried rice and special desserts P1,500

Maya Quick & Easy Gulaman Delights: May 5 (Sat) 3 5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Coffee Jelly, Almond Jelly, Fruity Chewy Salad, 24-Hour Salad, Fresh Crab, and Buko Pandan. With food styling presentation
P350

Pasta: May 12 (Sat) 1:30 5 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Cannelloni; assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettuccini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra) Bonus. homemade pasta making P600

Pinoy Bread: May 19 (Sat.) 2 – 5 p.m. Pandesal, Ensaymada, Spanish Bread, Mongo Loaf, Cinnamon Rolls, Rainbow Bread, Raisin Loaf. P600

Japanese Cooking: May 26 (Sat) 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Miso Soup, Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi. Basic Sushi preparation
P750

Baking with Institutional Mixes. May 26 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple-Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate, Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Pretzel Hotdog on Stick, Mango Samurai, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Includes lecture on cost profit analysis.
P500

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON FOR ADULT (Daytime & Selected Evening Sessions):

Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: May 8-12 or 22-25 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Coverage: menu planning international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salad, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch P2,500

Basic Baking: May 9-11 or 23-25 (W-F) 1:30 – 5 p.m. hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast bread and more.
P2,000

Cooking I (Basic Cooking). For Messman, Steward and Beginners: May 15-18 or May 29 June 1 (T-F) 1:30 – 5 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes, Techniques of de-boning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing, Table setting and napkin-folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,200

Restaurant Management; May 22-24 (T-Th evening) 5:45 - 8:45 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, etc, proven techniques on profitable service operations with free snacks P2,000

Bakery & Bakeshop Operation: May 22-24 (T-Th evening) 5:45 - 8:45 p.m. Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on P2,000

For reservation and inquiries, visit Maya Kitchen at 8th floor, Libety Building, A. Arnaiz Ave., (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph

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